

December 12, 1986

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ORAL QUESTIONS

PCS Lanigan Dispute

Mr. Koskie: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was to be to the minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, but in his absence I'd like to direct the question to the Premier. And, Mr. Premier, it has to do with the dispute at PCS Lanigan.

It's the longest strike in the history of a Saskatchewan Crown corporation; 290 workers at PCS Lanigan division have been off the job since March 10th -- 10 months this week. They've been without a contract since January 31, 1985 -- almost, in fact, two years next month.

I ask you, Mr. Premier, when is your government and the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan going to quit playing games with the lives of these potash workers and get back to the bargaining table and make a serious effort to arrive at a fair and reasonable contract?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As my hon. colleague knows, I met with the potash employees this summer; I believe it was in Watrous. And on more than one occasion I met with them and they, for example, asked if I would help get both sides back to the table. And I did that, Mr. Speaker, I put them back to the table, and I said we will make sure that there is a good offer for the employees.

And I don't recall what it is but I'm sure the minister would. But it was something like 3 per cent over the first year and 3 per cent over the next year. It was definitely a raise. If not 6 per cent, it was 5, over the two- or three-year period. And it was employment and it was an increase. And as I understand it, Mr. Speaker, it was rejected by the employees.

Now I can understand why they might want 10 per cent or they might want more than that. But, Mr. Speaker, under these general economic times, if you can have your work and you can have a raise in line with generally what's going on throughout the economy and the industry, that's . . . I believe the public see that as fair.

So when we went back to the table on the request of the miners who visited with me while I was on my summer tour, I said, we will give you a fair offer, and I mean that. And they received what I believe is a fair offer. And they voted to reject the raise and to reject the offer, and as a result they're still not working.

Now I've talked to many people in the community and surrounding areas, and I'm sure that the member has, and at some point the point are going to say, look, we know that prices are down in potash and prices are down in wheat and prices are down in this. I believe that you've got to be reasonable.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would say that that offer has been there and it's been rejected. I point out again, it was a raise and it was for over more than one year. I can get the information -- I don't have it with me -- and it was as a result of them meeting with me and asking them to do it again.

Mr. Koskie: -- Supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, I do want the details of what you have in fact offered the miners, because certainly the impression that you have given to this House is a far cry from what the miners indicate in Lanigan. So I ask you: one, are you satisfied that what you have placed before the miners of this province is fair and reasonable, and is it the last offer?

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, I, and I'm sure the hon. member knows, I don't know or can't recall right now all the details of that offer. Okay?

An Hon. Member: -- But you leave the impression . . .

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Well I leave the impression that I visited with the miners, and I did, and I asked the potash corporation to go back to the table and present a reasonable offer. And from my recollection, they did. And obviously, or I guess history will speak for itself, the union, or the members, or the miners, or whatever, voted on it and rejected it. Rejected the offer, and it was a raise. I know that it was a raise . . . And it had over some period of time . . . And I will get those details.

Obviously as well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that we don't negotiate on the floor of the legislature with respect to whether it's public employees. I mean we have free collective bargaining. They want the confidentiality and we want the confidentiality. That's the way it should be. But I can say that it was a raise, and it was a reasonable offer. The percentages I don't recall exactly, but it was certainly within reason, given what the industry is doing and what the rate of inflation is, and given the prices in the potash industry, and given changes over the last six months and six months before that and so forth, from the information that I have received.

Mr. Koskie: -- Supplemental. Mr. Premier, you indicated that you got involved, as you indicated when you spoke to the miners either in Humboldt or Watrous. I want to ask you: was the rejection by the union on the basis of the monetary package, or was it in respect to job security?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I was not there when they voted on their package. I can take notice of that question and I can get the minister to provide me with the information. But they rejected it, and for whatever reason, their reasons are their own, I would guess.

Mr. Koskie: -- Supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, are you aware of the kind of hurt that the long strike has brought to the community of Lanigan and surrounding municipalities, the small-business people in that community? As one small-business man told reporters recently, "We're struggling, we're bleeding." I ask you: what hope can you hold out to the people of the community of Lanigan that this very important source of revenue will be restored by a reasonable and fair settlement.

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I believe the word is "reasonable." That's what it is, and if you walk through the streets of Lanigan, that's what they're asking for – reasonable people – reasonable. And the business men that I talked to, and the farmers in there, and the miners, and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I've talked to a lot of them, and they've talked to me, and they want to see people, they want to see them spending the money in the stores, and they want to see them buying Christmas presents. And they say, here is an offer with a raise and longevity, and it's been rejected. Now you can talk to people across the province of Saskatchewan and say, I believe we should be reasonable. Well there was a reasonable offer on the table and it was rejected by the union.

Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for the people who rejected it. They turned down a raise, and they turned down a contract when other people across the province have signed. Now that's their responsibility, Mr. Speaker. It

will be unfortunate, obviously, for the community, for stores, shopkeepers, small businesses, if the money isn't spent.

Campus Employment Centre Funding Cut-backs

Mr. Prebble: -- My question is for the Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower. The minister will be aware that the Mulroney government recently implemented major cut-backs to Canada employment centres across this country, including a 30 per cent cut-back to the campus employment centre at the University of Saskatchewan. And that's meant, Mr. Minister, that 22 large employers over the last two months have either had great difficulty or have not been able at all to conduct job interviews on the campus. And there have been dozens and dozens of lost job opportunities and lost interview opportunities for students.

My question is: what action has the minister taken to try to convince his federal counterpart that the funding cut-backs at the campus employment centre at the University of Saskatchewan are short-sighted and unwarranted? Have you asked the minister to reverse those cut-backs, and if so, can you table the correspondence that indicates that you've done that?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: -- Mr. Speaker, I think it was just two days ago that I met with the members of the students' union at the University of Saskatchewan. This issue was raised with me by them. It's one that concerns them; it's one that concerns me and our government. And I gave them my undertaking that I would raise it, not only with the appropriate minister in Ottawa, but as well, with others of our colleagues in the federal caucus.

What will come of that—and I have no letters or anything like that to be tabled for the member at this point in time – what comes of that, I cannot say. But clearly we're interested in having job opportunities and knowledge of possible job opportunities made available to those students on an equal basis, and fairly, as they might be made to those living in Ontario, for example.

I recognize that in an office where you had 10 people, a 30 per cent cut-back, if in fact the hon. member's numbers are right, the removal of three has a more serious implication than if you have an office of 100 and you eliminate 30, because you've still got 70 people to pick up the task. And I suspect when the cut-backs were made, if in fact they were to the degree the hon. member states, then that eminent sense of fairness the government often employs . . . We tend to do these in a horizontal basis and not always look at individual staffing requirements in individual offices, and it's the smaller ones sometimes that get hurt. Now that may not be the case, but it may well be the case, and it's something I will be raising with my federal colleagues.

Mr. Prebble: -- New question, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the minister about a troubling comment in the throne speech which seems to suggest further cut-backs at our universities and technical institutes. The speech says, and I quote: "Because resources are scarce, this will involve determining areas of specialization and avoiding unnecessary duplication." I'd like the minister's assurance that this statement does not foreshadow cut-backs in funding to our universities or cuts in financial support for our technical institute programs. I'd like to ask the minister just what is meant by those words.

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: -- I think, Mr. Speaker, I can best answer the question by restating some of what I said last night in my throne speech remarks. Because really the question asks: what are our goals relative to post secondary education? As I said last night, our goal is simply this, to provide the best quality, period. And I think our track records speaks for itself, Mr. Speaker, because between 1982 and '86 this government increased total funding to the post secondary education sector by a greater percentage than any other province in Canada, Mr. Speaker. The record speaks for itself, as it has in the past and it will in the future.

Now if the hon. member is suggesting that if there's duplication in the system that we should let that continue, the public of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, and we, as the public trustees of the public purse, would have difficulty with that.

So I'm never in favour of unnecessary duplication. And certainly in the economic realities that we live with, we must never, ever have unnecessary duplication, nor must we commit the error of omission, Mr. Speaker. That is our goal.

Mr. Prebble: -- Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister may say that things are fine at our universities and technical institutes, but that's simply not the case. We had a day of protest this week, Mr. Minister, at the University of Saskatchewan. The faculty there were expressing their frustration with the fact that, while there's been record enrolment increases, there has been no additional money to hire permanent new faculty or permanent new staff. The libraries at the universities are in a desperate situation and have been ranked 98th out of 104.

Mr. Speaker: -- Order, order!

Mr. Prebble: -- My question for the minister is: do you not see that this kind of protest, like the one on Wednesday at the University of Saskatchewan, is more evidence that, rather than further tight budgets at our university, what's called for urgently is improved funding by your government for post-secondary educational institutions?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: -- The demonstration the hon. member refers to, I really have no comment on except to say that the university administration, who I have a great deal of confidence in, and in fact had a chance to meet informally with the board of governors on Wednesday night, and I leave that matter in their hands. I merely reiterate that, despite the sweeping statements, no other jurisdiction in the country increased funding like our government did this past four years when it comes to post-secondary education.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

PCS Lanigan Dispute

Mr. Upshall: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. A group of concerned citizens from Lanigan has asked for a meeting with you to discuss the impact of the strike. Because of the very urgency of this situation, Mr. Speaker, have you agreed to meet with the Lanigan committee? And, if so, when is that meeting?

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I have not agreed to meet, as I recall, with anybody from Lanigan specifically in the last few days. If there's correspondence on the way to me or letters or something else, I'd be glad to take notice and respond to it when it gets to my desk. I won't say I wouldn't meet; I may, but I have not agreed to meet with a specific group in recent date.

Mr. Upshall: -- Final supplementary, Mr. Premier, when the doctors of this province were recently involved in a current contract dispute with your Minister of Health, you personally intervened to help get the dispute settled. You were prepared to come to the aid of Saskatchewan doctors. Will you now come to the aid of workers in this province and personally get involved in bringing the PCS Lanigan dispute to quick and fair settlement?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I was involved when we made the move to remove extra billing in the province of Saskatchewan, not because of any particular profession but because of the public of Saskatchewan. And I did become involved, and with the former minister of health we struck a deal with the medical profession which they're happy with and we're happy with, and there's no more extra billing in the province of Saskatchewan. It's removed. And it was about time.

With respect to the Lanigan potash people, I have met with them and I've put the potash corporation under a directive to go back to the table and present a reasonable offer, and they did that. And the union rejected it -- rejected it. Now they voted to reject an offer that was there, and the people of Lanigan and those that I talked to say: well, as long as it's reasonable, we could all be going on with our life; money could be spent in the stores; Christmas could be a lot better. But the union will not agree to a raise; it will not agree to the contract.

So, Mr. Speaker, I've been involved. I asked them to go back to the table, and they did, and they rejected the offer.

Building of Power Transmission Line in Northern Saskatchewan

Mr. Thompson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, and it deals with the announcement last March and the re-announcement in September of plans to build a power transmission line in northern Saskatchewan. In March you said the project would employ 150 people during construction; that construction would begin immediately and take two years.

Can the minister explain why there are now crews working this winter along the route and why some contracts for the clearing of trees and bush along the power line right of way have been cancelled or postponed in recent months?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: -- Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is right. We have announced a power line that will go from Beaver Lodge and take in eight communities along the way, plus the Rabbit Lake mine, all the way to Wollaston Post across Wollaston Lake through, island hopping, to get that additional, I think about five or six kilometres, to get to Wollaston Post.

I don't recall the total capital cost or the total number of employees during the project. And as it relates to current activity, there is no doubt we're committed to completing the line within the two year period. I believe that Camsell Portage is . . . the work has already been done to get the line through there, the surveying and the clearing. And that's my belief.

If that's not accurate, I will take notice of the question and get the information that I know the hon. member sincerely wants. And I'll get that information for the hon. member, and if he wants he can share it with the member for Quill Lakes to see if that will settle him down.

High-Tech Strategy

Mr. Koenker: -- My question is to the Acting Minister for Science and Technology. During the recent election campaign, the Premier announced what he called a new high-tech strategy and committed \$50 million over the next five years to high-tech firms in Saskatchewan to develop new products and to do research.

During the throne speech, however, we learned that this \$50 million will not go to high-tech firms but will rather be some sort of grant to help businesses buy small computers and other equipment. Can the minister confirm that this will, in fact, be the case?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, the question posed by the hon. member will be addressed over the next four years, and that type of policy being developed is generally found when the budget is announced and the minister responsible for science and technology outlines the new initiatives that he and his department and this government will pursue in the field of science and technology.

Mr. Koenker: -- Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the new policy in fact be for small business purchase of high-technical equipment, or will it be direct assistance to high-tech firms themselves?

Hon. Mr. Andrew: -- Well the way the policy will be pursued is a round of consultation with the industry with people involved in science and technology. It is not the view of this government that we should somehow simply superimpose policies on small business and tell them to like it or lump it. We will consult with them. We believe in that process of listening and co-operating with the industry. You can get the best mileage out of the dollars that are going to be allocated to that, and we have a great deal of faith in the high-technology industry both in Saskatoon and the rest of the province.

SaskExpo Tower

Mr. Solomon: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for the SaskExpo '86 Corporation, and it deals with the decision to junk the Saskatchewan pavilion at Expo. Mr. Minister, a few days prior to the election, October 10th to be exact, the head of SaskExpo '86, Gord Staseson, told the news media that it would cost a half million dollars to relocate the pavilion to Saskatchewan.

A month later, 30 days later when you announced that relocation would be too costly, you said the cost would be more than \$1 million. Four or five days prior to the announcement, Saskatchewan Expo Corporation '86 officials met with the Park Place group, one of the groups that made the bid from Moose Jaw on the tower, and according to officials there, there was no indication that the decision was contrary to what they believed it to be.

Mr. Minister, what changed between October 10th and November 14th to more than double the cost of relocating the Expo tower?

Hon. Mr. Berntson: -- Mr. Speaker, I guess one thing positive that flows from this discussion is that I can admit now that it was a tough decision, but it was a decision that would never had to have been made had members opposite been sitting on this side when the decision was made to go to Expo in the first place.

And I know, I've talked to some of the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, that were out to Vancouver and visited our pavilion at Expo and every one of them talked about what a great monument it was.

I don't remember precisely the dates that were set out by the hon. member in the question as it relates to an announced cost. I don't accept at face value the comments that he attributes to the commissioner of SaskExpo, Gord Staseson, who I might add did a very, very good job in representing Saskatchewan to the world.

Mr. Speaker: -- Order, order. Would the minister please. . .

Mr. Solomon: -- I have a *Leader-Post* article which says on Friday, October 10th, it'll cost \$500,000 to bring the SaskExpo tower to Saskatchewan.

In a news release dated November 14th the minister says it's going to cost \$1 million. And I'd like to ask the minister why there was a discrepancy, and what was the basis for the increase in that period of time from \$500,00 to \$1 million?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Berntson: -- Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of confidence in the people at SaskExpo, including Gordon Staseson and Jim Ebbels, the architect and project manager. I kind of suspect that the original estimates had to be adjusted somewhat when the bids came in for dismantling and transportation. I'm not entirely sure of that, but I do know that the final estimate of dismantling and transportation and re-assembly and all of that was in the neighbourhood of \$1.2 million.

Based on that information, Mr. Speaker, and in consultation with the people in Moose Jaw, including His Worship, Mayor Scoop Lewry, they agreed with us that we ought not to try and bring it back. You can build an exact replica for less than that. Our preference would have been, Mr. Speaker, to have the Saskatchewan pavilion stay where it was as a monument to Saskatchewan at the gateway from the Pacific rim, Mr. Speaker.

That wasn't to be the case. The people in Vancouver and the new government in Vancouver decided they were going to redevelop that area.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 5 – An Act respecting the Organization of the Executive Government of Saskatchewan

Hon. Mr. Berntson: -- Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill respecting the Organization of the Executive Government of Saskatchewan.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: -- Before orders of the day, yesterday the member for Saskatoon Riversdale rose on a point of order stating that the Minister of Health, during oral question period, had referred to a letter, and that the minister be required to table the letter. I deferred my ruling at that time.

I refer all hon. members to *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, Fifth Edition, pages 115 to 116, paragraph 327(1), (3), and (5) as follows:

A Minister of the Crown is not at liberty to read or quote from a dispatch or other state paper not before the House, unless he be prepared to lay it upon the Table. This restraint is similar to the rule of evidence in courts of law, which prevent counsel from citing documents which have not been produced in evidence. The principle is so reasonable that it has not been contested; and when the objection has been made in time, it has been generally acquiesced in.

Subsection (3):

A public document referred to but not cited or quoted by a Minister need not be tabled.

And subsection (5):

To be cited, a document must be quoted or specifically used to influence debate. The admission that a document exists, or the reading of the salutation or address of a letter does not constitute citing.

I have had an opportunity to review the *Debates and Proceedings* for yesterday. I note that the minister did refer to a letter he wrote, but he did not quote from the letter. I rule, therefore, that the minister need not table the letter referred to.

Further, I want to refer all hon. members to rule 35, subsection (3), which states:

Mr. Speaker shall not entertain points of order during the Oral Question Period. Points of Order may be raised later on Orders of the Day.

I would ask all members to remember that points of order arising out of the oral question period should be raised before orders of the day.

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

Mr. Goulet: -- Before the orders of the day, I rise on a point of personal privilege. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the member from Regina South was concerned about the use of my own aboriginal language, which is Cree, and was wondering about the translation. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read what I said on both days, so I could set the record straight.

On December 10, Mr. Speaker, I said:

I will therefore, Mr. Speaker, (and I quote) deal with the issues of the throne speech and also of the North and also of aboriginal people, in my own language. I will provide the translation for it, right after.

Mr. Speaker, I proceeded to do the oral translation of it right after.

On the second day, Mr. Speaker, I said, and I quote:

When I talked in Cree, I mentioned that I would be presenting the translation in English. So the presentation that I am making right now is a translation of yesterday's talk in Cree.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore stand to pay due respects to the language of my people and the language of the House.

Hon. Mr. Andrew: -- I wonder if perhaps the hon. member could clarify more succinctly for us exactly what is the point of order that he raised.

Mr. Speaker: -- The member has raised a point of privilege, the way I recall it, not a point of order.

The member has raised, in my opinion, not a real point of privilege, but an explanation of what happened in the House the previous day. Under those circumstances, I feel that the House accept the member's explanation, and I don't see at this time a specific ruling on a point of privilege.

Mr. Goulet: -- Mr. Speaker, I think I may not have made myself clear. I raised the point of privilege basically because the member from Regina south, in regards to the situation, accused me of misleading the House to the legislature by not providing the translation. But, Mr. Speaker, I did provide the translation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: -- Order, please, order! Order, please! I thank the member for clarifying his position. And having done that, I now refer hon. members to paragraph 19, page 12 in . . . Order, please, order! Order, please! I thank the member for clarifying his position. And having done that, I now refer hon. members to paragraph 19, page 12, in *Beauchesne's* which reads as follows:

A dispute arising between two Members as to allegations of facts, does not fulfil the conditions of parliamentary privilege.

And I feel that we will have to now leave that issue at this point.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Not Debatable)

Hon. Mr. Andrew: -- Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we could on Motions for Returns (Not Debatable), 1 through 43, if we could make those debatable.

Mr. Speaker: -- Debate.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Martineau and the amendment thereto moved by the Hon. Mr. Blakeney.

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you in your new position. I know the people of Saskatchewan hold your Chair and your position with a high degree of respect and the people that sit in that Chair. I want to congratulate you for having the opportunity to serve the public of Saskatchewan.

I want to take a few moments to elaborate on a few things that were in the Speech from the Throne. And I will certainly be in support, Mr. Speaker, of the Speech from the Throne and will be obviously voting in favour of it when the appropriate time comes.

I want to point out to the members of the legislature and to the people of Saskatchewan that this government has received a new mandate – a new mandate from the people of Saskatchewan – a mandate to build, to diversify, manufacture and process, to create new businesses, to invite people into the province of Saskatchewan to make their home.

We have a mandate as well, Mr. Speaker, to protect people, to make sure that we protect families, particularly our growing families; and senior citizens – senior citizens across this province who have built this great province of Saskatchewan; to protect women and to protect children; farmers; to make sure that the government can stand there to protect them against international events or climatic events or others when they need to be protected.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate from the people of Saskatchewan, a new mandate to manage the province's resources and the taxpayers' dollars well. And that mandate says to us that we should be as

efficient and as effective as we can as we build this province and as we protect families and as we carve out a future.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have given this government a mandate to lead – to lead this province, provide leadership to the country where possible, and provide leadership on an international plane where it has Saskatchewan interests at stake.

We have developed, for example, a local agricultural strategy; it's been extended to a national agricultural strategy. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, one of the responsibilities we have in the mandate we have is to do our part in designing a rural agricultural strategy. Our pension legislation, Mr. Speaker, is an example of where leadership is needed. This jurisdiction in this province has provided that enabling legislation which is pioneering, not only in Saskatchewan and in Canada but in North America, trade relationships, public participation in Crown corporations, that kind of leadership I believe that the people of Saskatchewan have given this government in its new mandate. And I want to refer to those four mandates – to build, to protect, to manage, and to lead – in a little bit more detail in the next few minutes, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to building, the people of Saskatchewan want their government to build and develop this province. And frankly, Mr. Speaker, any politician who doesn't want to build and doesn't want to see Saskatchewan communities develop is out of step with Saskatchewan people. What the people have told us, from the north, south, east and west, rural and urban, is to develop our communities, build on the strengths of the resources and the energy of the people in the towns and the villages and put them together and create an environment here, not only for tomorrow, not only for next year, but for generations to come. And I want to give some examples that the people have suggested to us.

One, Mr. Speaker, is becoming increasingly evident. In the whole area of agriculture we find Saskatchewan in a leadership role, partly because we have almost half the farm land in Canada, but partly as a result of our very productive agricultural community. We know now that farmers spend something like \$250 million every year on farm chemicals. And the people of Saskatchewan have said to me and have said to this government and said to the members of this Assembly: we should be manufacturing the farm chemicals here in the province of Saskatchewan. We import \$250 million worth of farm chemicals every year from Ontario, from Germany, from the United States. The jobs aren't here, the jobs are some place else. We pay for the transportation costs, and, Mr. Speaker, we don't create the jobs here as a result.

People have said to me and they've said to the members of this government: wherever possible we should be manufacturing those farm chemicals here; we should make sure that wherever possible, cut the costs to farmers. And I've talked to people across this province and, Mr. Speaker, everyone agrees – the farmers agree, the people in towns and villages agree, the people of North Battleford, Regina, Estevan, the small communities on the east and the west side of this province agree that we should be manufacturing farm chemicals in this province. It's diversification, it's processing, it's manufacturing and it's creating the jobs here. You're taking that natural demand in agriculture, combining it with the talents and the energy of people in towns and villages and cities, putting it together and creating jobs, creating jobs right in the province of Saskatchewan, cutting the cost to the farms, and we're breaking that dependency on Ontario and Quebec.

And for an awful long time this province, Mr. Speaker, and in western Canada, have had to pay the freight both ways from the central part of this nation, pay the transportation out, pay the transportation for goods back and forth. Somebody in Ontario would manufacture a farm chemical or some other good, add a certain margin; we'd pay the transportation freight out here. The next year they'd add another 15 or 20 per cent. We'd pay the transportation out here and people in Saskatchewan are saying, why don't we manufacture it here and break that dependency?

Ontario may want to live behind tariff walls. Ontario may like to see Westerners pay that transportation both ways, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's good for us. And the mandate that we have received, Mr. Speaker, in this last election is to manufacture farm inputs – whether they're farm chemicals or farm fertilizers – right here in the province to save the transportation costs, create the jobs here and to break that dependency on either international firms or central Canadians, or in fact whole parts of national firms like those we see in Germany or France and the United States and others that sell products here.

What I want to say, Mr. Speaker, is everybody in Saskatchewan agrees with that. Nobody disagrees. They're all saying that we should manufacture those goods and those services right here. They have a little question mark in their mind. Why wasn't it done before? This province was started in 1905. Why wasn't this manufacturing and this processing encouraged before? We've had other administrations. We've had other governments, but always we were left dependent on Ontario and dependent on Quebec. Why couldn't we manufacture agricultural goods and services here to a very large extent?

We spend the money every year. Farmers religiously year after year after year spend \$250 million in Saskatchewan alone buying farm chemicals, and not one drop was manufactured here. And not one administration ever gave any incentives to have it manufactured here. Well, Mr. Speaker, the mandate that we have received from the people of Saskatchewan, rural and urban, is to manufacture and process here and break that dependency.

(1045)

Let me give you a second example, Mr. Speaker. In this province we spend in the neighbourhood of a billion dollars plus – I believe it's close now to \$1,200 per man, woman and child – on health care. Every year! It is an annual megaproject in its own right. Every year the taxpayers of this province spend over \$1 billion – over a thousand dollars per man, woman and child – in health care provision. And, Mr. Speaker, do you know how much of the goods that we use in the health care system are manufactured here in Saskatchewan? Virtually none. Whether it is the supplies, whether it is the medical equipment, whether it's the linen, whatever it is, all that money – hundreds of millions of dollars – we buy from somebody else. We buy from Ontario; we buy from the United States; we buy from Germany.

And when you ask people, should we manufacture health care equipment and supplies in Saskatchewan? Everyone agrees. They all agree, whether they're in Prince Albert, whether they're in Moose Jaw, Estevan, Weyburn, it doesn't matter. They all agree we should manufacture those health care supplies here.

There's a manufacturer's intravenous solution being manufactured in Wolseley, Saskatchewan, and it just developed recently. That plant will mean 50 new jobs in the province of Saskatchewan with an infinite demand here in the Saskatchewan because we spent a billion dollars. It will save the hospital in Melfort a quarter of a million dollars over the next five years because it's manufactured here. A quarter of a million dollars in health care and we get the jobs and we've broken the link with eastern Canada – central Canada. The people agree, whether they're in Melfort, or in Swift Current, that we should be doing this. They have a question. Why wasn't it done before? Where was the vision? Where was the leadership? We're spending all this money on health care. Why wasn't there the incentives? Why weren't there incentives to manufacture and process and diversify and build here at home?

Well the vision wasn't there, Mr. Speaker, but I'll say this. As a result of the last election we have a mandate from the people of Saskatchewan – a new mandate – to manufacture and process as much health care equipment as we can in the province of Saskatchewan, to make sure that we do what is good for this province, not just what's good for Ontario, or not just what's good for Quebec or some other country. Keep the jobs here. Take the strength of our huge demand in health care, the talents of people in towns and villages, put them together and say, we can manufacture here. We can manufacture the linen in Swift Current. Why not?

And, Mr. Speaker, there is another benefit to these. Why can't we manufacture and process and export into the United States, or to the Pacific rim, or to central Canada if we build the economies of scale in intravenous solution manufacturing and packaging right here? We have now got contracts in many other countries – more contracts – that we are now manufacturing for the rest of the world, and it started here in health care.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if we don't want to be tied to the whip-saws of prices of oil or timber or wheat or international speculators or interest rates or whatever, we need to diversify and broaden and deepen our economy so that we can be here protecting ourselves against those kinds of conditions and manufacturing here.

Let me give you a third example, Mr. Speaker. Tourism. For the longest time people in this province never heard much about the beauty of Saskatchewan. And certainly people outside the province didn't hear about Saskatchewan. It's been said in various parts of Canada, Saskatchewan was the best kept secret in North America. People did not talk about Saskatchewan as a place to go to visit, to see the lakes, to visit the people, to see the beautiful scenery, to experience the outdoors. Tourism is a very, very powerful industry, Mr. Speaker. Some say it could be the largest renewable industry in the world by the year 2000.

And when we talk about promoting Saskatchewan, and when we see what we could do at Expo, letting the whole world know about us, and when we talk about doing that in community after community after community across this province, everyone agrees. Nobody disagrees.

They say let's take Lloydminster and show the world what Lloydminster's about. We're proud of that heritage. Let's take Maple Creek, and the community there wants to show the world what Maple Creek is like – whether it's the fowl suppers, whether it's the ranch land; whether it's the oilmen, whether it's the schools, the communities – whatever it is, they're proud of their heritage and they're proud of their community.

And if we can build on that, Mr. Speaker, and invite people all over Canada and North America and the world to come to Saskatchewan and visit us and see us and spend their money, it's hundreds of millions of dollars a year to see and visit with the people of Saskatchewan, as we did at Expo. And people all over the world ranked us at Expo -- Saskatchewan at Expo – among the top 10 of any of the people that were or any of the countries that were there. They said that spirit of Saskatchewan was absolutely magnificent; it was unique. And they want to come to this province.

When we say we're going to diversify and encourage tourism here, encourage conferences, encourage skiing, encourage golfing, encourage the exploration of our lakes and the enjoyment of the fishing – the best fresh water fishing any place in the world – people agree. And they say, that makes sense. It's a renewable industry, and no one disagrees with it. No one.

They'll ask the question, what was going on before? Why weren't previous administrations promoting this beautiful province? Why were some politicians saying, don't go to Expo? They've even looked at various jurisdictions to our east that didn't even show up at Expo, not wanting to be proud of Canada and proud of their province and do the kinds of things that we know that we're capable of.

Well I just . . . I point out, Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate. People of Saskatchewan have given this government a mandate to promote this province, to allow the world to see what this province is and what it can be, to invite them in. And everyone agrees. The only question they ask: why wasn't it done before? What was holding them up? What was the political philosophy that was keeping the people that were running this province before from opening up to the world?

Well I'll give you another example, Mr. Speaker. It was raised in question period today. And that is the development and the use of technology for Saskatchewan people – not only Saskatchewan businesses and Saskatchewan firms, but Saskatchewan families. And as I travel across this province and people have talked to me, they said, let's make the best and most efficient and effective use of technology that we can.

We are known, Mr. Speaker, for our ability to manage and our ability to take technology and use it well. Agriculture is the best example that I know. I mean, we're taken a country and an area, a hundred years ago when the average farm would harvest a few hundred bushels a day, and today, Mr. Speaker, with technology, we can know that a man and his wife and a child, sitting in the cab of a combine, can harvest a thousand bushels an hour. Technology, Mr. Speaker.

The Chinese are here to see our technology; the Japanese are here to see our technology; Europeans are here; the Soviet Union is here – people from around the world to watch us use our technology.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we don't want to be left behind in any technology. Communications, management training skills, are one of the most important things that we can do and use and enforce, so this province will be on the forefront and on the frontier of all kinds of new national and international markets that are going to be developed.

Our children need to be educated with the technology. Our managers need to be able to use the technology. And there is a mandate to this government, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we help all of society, whether they're in schools, whether they're in hospitals, whether they're at universities, whether they're in business, to have access to the very best training and the very best technology that we can get hold of.

And do you know who disagrees with that, Mr. Speaker? Nobody. Everybody in this province says yes, let's take the best management skills and the best technology we can, and let's train our people so that we can use them wisely.

The only question they will ask, why wasn't it done before? Where were the incentives? And it's a legitimate question. The mandate for this government and the mandate that was read in the Speech from the Throne is develop, use our management skills and our technology wherever you can find it around the world, and don't be second, or don't be third. Wherever possible be in first place on the world scene. And we will, Mr. Speaker, because we can, if we have the leadership and if we have the support, as we have now, from the people of Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can go through and I'm going to touch on several items that the people of Saskatchewan have suggested that they agree with. When we have an opportunity to make paper in this province as opposed to fence posts, and selling posts nationally and internationally, if we can make fine quality paper and sell it world-wide and create more jobs, everybody agrees. Nobody disagrees with that.

Let's take our resources, the rural, the timber, combine it with the talents and the strengths of men and women in towns, and let's manufacture and process – make the finest value-added product we can and market it all over the world. And no matter where you go in this province they say, right on, I agree. They may ask, why wasn't it done before? What was going on before? Why didn't it happen? But they'll say, it's time to do it now. And we have that mandate.

When it comes to marketing livestock, Mr. Speaker, people in this province agree that we shouldn't just sell hogs and beef. We should process that product, sell the finest Canadian bacon that you can make – a great quality product, great reputation – and market that world-wide. Manufacture that product. Take the strength of the agriculture, the talents of the men and women in towns and villages, put them together whether in Saskatoon or North Battleford and say, let's create those jobs here and manufacture that product and sell it internationally.

And do you know who disagrees with that, Mr. Speaker? Nobody. They all say, let's do it. It makes sense. You're taking the rural and the urban and combining them together; taking the strength of agriculture and the talents of people in towns and villages and putting them together and creating new value-added products. Do you know the only question they ask: why wasn't it being done before? Well we now have a mandate, Mr. Speaker, to do this.

If you look at turbine manufacturing, everybody agrees that we should encourage others to come in here and manufacture as opposed to just buying it from Japan or China.

If you look at oil and gas production and marketing, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have said to us, let's make our own diesel fuel. Let's make our own fuel oil. Why should we have to buy it from Alberta or buy it from some place else when we have oil here? We could be self-sufficient in oil and gas, taking our own refineries and taking the oil from Saskatchewan – not the oil from Alberta or the oil from some place else, but taking it here and processing it, Mr. Speaker, and making our own diesel fuel and our own gasoline so we could be in control of our destiny. And we can sell heavy crude in the United States; we can sell synthetic crude; we could sell diesel fuel if we wanted to.

And when we talk about taking our own refinery or having a stand-alone upgrader or various combinations, everyone in the province agrees. Nobody disagrees. They're saying, you have a mandate to go build that. They'll ask, what was going on before? Why did it take so long? What did previous governments do? Why couldn't we have been making our own gasoline and diesel fuel for years? That's the only question. But everybody agrees that we should be doing it.

When it comes to water management, Mr. Speaker – water management – people in this province want to see that resource well managed. They see in many cases the water going right through on an annual basis into the ocean and we take very little use of it. The water on a seasonal basis goes through this province. They want to see that water managed, they want to see electrical power projects, they want to see recreation developments, and they want to see irrigation developments. And everybody, and all political persuasions are saying, yes, manage those resources to get the most use out of them, whether it's power projects or recreation or tourism or, indeed, drought-proofing Saskatchewan so we don't have to import feed in dry years from southern Alberta or southern Ontario. It just makes sense. Everyone agrees.

Mr. Speaker, in the opening of the initial round of Rafferty dam, I've had a quote and I just want to share it with you this morning. This is a quote about water management and irrigation and water projects by a former premier of this province. And I quote:

The project is multi-purpose. Neither the electricity nor the irrigation nor the water supply made available would be sufficiently valuable alone to warrant the cost of construction, but together they make it worth while.

And it goes on:

This project will mean a great deal to Saskatchewan in terms of crop diversification through irrigation, the generation of hydro-electric power, the provision of adequate water supplies, flood control, and recreational benefits.

Mr. Speaker, those words were spoken 28 years ago by Tommy Douglas about Gardiner dam.

Mr. Speaker, I believe people in this province want to see building. They want to see creation. They want to see development, whether it's in water or whether it's in paper or whether it's in oil or whether it's in rural communities – wherever it is. And people of all political jurisdictions – and I could haul them out, from

Jimmy Gardiner to every political persuasion – when you talk to the people across this province they want to see that strategy developed.

(1100)

And water is one of them. The only thing that they will ask is, where have we been? Why has it taken 50 years to develop a Rafferty project? Why is it going to take so long to see this irrigation development when we can have water available – not imposed on people as they want to see it happen. They can use it. Drought-proof this southern part of the province. Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate. We have a mandate in this province to manufacture where we can here, to “Buy Saskatchewan” where it’s at all efficient and effective to do so, make sure Saskatchewan firms can compete and tender for huge projects that we have here. The corporations . . . The major public corporations we have in this province spend hundreds of millions of dollars, and when we came into power, Mr. Speaker, virtually none of that was purchased in Saskatchewan, virtually none of it.

We have said, Buy Saskatchewan. We’ve asked the power corporation – not asked, we’ve told them – power corporation, SaskTel and others, you make sure you source Saskatchewan wherever possible to provide the jobs here and make sure that Saskatchewan people are allowed to compete for those. And people across this province, one corner to the other, agree, Mr. Speaker. They all agree. Nobody disagrees with that. The members opposite wouldn’t disagree with it. Buy Saskatchewan if it’s efficient, if you can cut your costs, and you allow that economic activity to take place at home.

The only question they’d ask is: what was going on before? Why wasn’t it done before? Why would these huge corporations, spending hundreds of millions of dollars, managed by the government, not addressing local initiatives, not providing local people with an opportunity to compete? And, Mr. Speaker, we have a long ways to go on that, and the mandate we have is, wherever possible allow Saskatchewan people to compete for those goods and services, whether it’s in health care manufacturing, whether it’s in the . . . whatever they’re going to use as motors or equipment or wire or whatever it is. In this province we’ve started, but we’ve got a long ways to go.

I will say, Mr. Speaker, the mandate that we have received will be taken very, very seriously, and we are going to make sure that that manufacturing and that process and that access to those hundreds of millions of dollars will take place in the province of Saskatchewan and not in the province of Ontario.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I want to give a couple more examples because they’re important – and this is just in the “builds” part of our mandate, just building, developing. When I travel across the province and I ask people about a new agriculture college, everybody agrees we should have one. Nobody disagrees with that. A science centre of excellence for this province so that we can have the best research and the best management and the best varieties, the best kinds and qualities and types of animals, we should have it here. And to have that centre of excellence is universally accepted, and I suspect even by the members of the opposition. The only question again, Mr. Speaker, people will ask time and time again: why hasn’t it been here before? What’s been the hold-up? What were the priorities?

We can go on, Mr. Speaker, and look at expansion of facilities for people. And particularly I’d like to point out the massive expansion in the development of facilities for senior citizens. And I know, Mr. Speaker, that the televised debates in this House is watched by an audience – a very unique audience – and to a very large extent by senior citizens. They watch the debates in this legislature because they want to know how their province is run and they have a great deal of experience, and in some cases they have the time.

Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate. We had a mandate in '82, and we have a mandate now to provide as many new facilities for senior citizens as we possibly can. That mandate, Mr. Speaker, is to say, whether the price of potash goes up or down or whether the price of wheat goes up or down or whether the price of oil goes up or down, our senior citizens are going to need increasing, and an ever increasing share of housing and facilities.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate to make sure that we would provide. And we are, Mr. Speaker. We are going to make sure. And I'll tell you, as we've developed 1,500 new spaces for senior citizens in the last four years in this province, no one disagrees with that. Every community I go to, every single community as I go across this province would say, I agree. Let us create more and more senior citizen accommodations of several varieties to make sure that our seniors are comfortable and protected and in comfort.

Well, Mr. Speaker, no one disagrees with that. Some would ask, why wasn't it done before? Some would ask, why was there a five-year freeze on the development of new nursing home facilities? Some would ask. Well the answer's becoming evident, Mr. Speaker. The mandate that we have is to build for senior citizens. And I will say to senior citizens, that mandate will be taken very, very seriously by this administration and we will not put a freeze on nursing home construction in this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- The development and the building, Mr. Speaker, of a new entrepreneurial spirit to create jobs in this province is also very much part of our mandate. Now you could take, Mr. Speaker, the classic economic levers of development and you can look at them. You can say that they're land and labour and capital, and you can put them together and you say you'll have economic development.

It really, Mr. Speaker, when you look at those three, they missed one important element, one important element, and that's that entrepreneurial spirit that will create something new – create something new. I'm advised, Mr. Speaker, that half of the jobs at the turn of the century win this country, half of all the jobs in this country, will be provided by firms that aren't even created yet today – aren't even created yet today.

New businesses, men and women who will create processing and manufacturing, supply health care equipment, supply this, supply agricultural chemicals, supply clothing, supply services and goods. That entrepreneurial spirit, Mr. Speaker, built this province and built this country. Well we have a mandate, Mr. Speaker, to encourage and help small business develop and that entrepreneurial spirit across this province, and everybody agrees. The opposition agrees. The public agrees.

Help those people create new businesses and new jobs and new processing and new manufacturing and new, services linked to tourism – that entrepreneurial spirit needs to be developed and encouraged. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, we're going to do that: an entrepreneurial institute; an entrepreneurial training program; help our young people be good managers; know how to deal in international markets; know how to manage funds.

But the drive, Mr. Speaker, the drive, that spirit that can take land and labour and capital and put it together in a new form, is the magic – is the magic of the western world. We have sent every other jurisdiction in the world behind us so far, whether it's in the Soviet Union or whether it's in South America or wherever it is.

That entrepreneurial spirit, the spirit of men and women to create new, to be free to create, is so powerful. The changes that we have made in the last hundred years in this continent dwarf anything else in the history of the world. And we've had the same land and the same labour and the same capital. And other jurisdictions in South America and other jurisdictions behind the great eastern wall have had the same land

and labour and capital, but they've missed one thing – that entrepreneurial spirit and that freedom to create new.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate in this province to help men and women and children be creative, to use their God-given talents in every single possible way they can, to build their communities, to manufacture, to process, to develop, to be out there in the arts, to be in there in music, to be there in sports – all that spirit, Mr. Speaker. And everyone agrees. There's only one question it raises: what was happening to it before? Where was the encouragement? Where were the incentives? Where was the freedom? It wasn't there.

Mr. Speaker, I will only say this: that entrepreneurial spirit that is in the heart and soul of every Saskatchewan person will be defended and defended and defended with this new mandate in this new government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, part of the building responsibility for any government is to provide the infrastructure so that people can build – that is providing the power, the water and all, the roads, and the general communication and transportation systems.

As I travel across Saskatchewan and I look at the new mandate that we have, I put that in the context of the Speech from the Throne. I'm reminded of three major projects that we have that people as well agree with.

Natural gas distribution across this province has proved to be extremely important to the people of rural Saskatchewan. It's a large project. It's \$350 million over 10 years. And everybody agrees with it. Everybody in the towns and villages, as I travel across this province, say bring us the natural gas to my farm, my town, my village, wherever it is, my community. They all agree.

It cuts your costs in about half. We have no end of surplus of natural gas in western Canada, billions of cubic feet between here and the Rocky Mountains, and we'll export it for generations. And they said, why can't we have access to it? Well we are, Mr. Speaker. We have a mandate to provide natural gas to the towns and villages, to the farms, to help us process, manufacture, and have a competitive edge.

And no one disagrees. Nobody disagrees. The opposition doesn't disagree. Everybody agrees that that should be done.

An Hon. Member: -- The farmers sure agree.

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Well that's true. The farmers do agree very much, Mr. Speaker. And I've been to some places where it's saved them as much as 25 and as much as \$50,00 a year in hog barns and other kinds of operations that they've had.

They'll say, why wasn't it here before? We've had this gas; why wasn't it a priority? What did the previous administrations do? Why did I have to pay those high prices for propane? Why couldn't I have access to natural gas? Well it's a good question. But they agree with this.

Individual line service – a very expensive project for a Crown corporation to provide individual communication technology to everybody in the province; two-way communication, computer access, forecasting, management systems; the best communication management development system anywhere in the world.

And we are providing it because the people of Saskatchewan said, I want my business. I want my children to be the best trained and have the best technology and the best communication system that there can be.

And when I announced that, Mr. Speaker – and I say this sincerely and humbly – when I announced this to the SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities) convention, which is a cross-section of people across this province, politically and geographically and every other demographic way that you could look at it, they gave me a standing ovation because they would have access to the best technology and the best management and the best communication systems any place in the world, right at their farm, right at their home.

And you travel across this province, and every single one of them will agree that that's the kind of thing that a government should do in providing them with the structure to build, that basic economic, social structure, and they agree. They'll have one question: what's been going on in the past? Why didn't people do it? What were they doing? Why have they forgotten us?

Well, Mr. Speaker, one more in the public utilities, because the three of them are about \$1.5 billion. We are going to take power lines and we're going to bury them in Saskatchewan. The engineers and others tell us it's a very good idea not to put up posts or power poles when they rot away and they've been there for 25 years or more; and as they deteriorate, we should put the lines underground. It's safer; it's less costly. And, Mr. Speaker, we're doing it all across the province, staged program over the next 10 years or more. And we're manufacturing, Mr. Speaker, the cable in Saskatchewan – manufacturing the cable – and do you know who disagrees with that? Nobody.

The whole province—the whole province – says this is absolutely the thing to do, bury those lines. It's a lot safer; it's less costly. Manufacture the wire in Saskatchewan. Don't buy it from Ontario; do it here. We'll manufacture it in Moose Jaw, or manufacture it in Weyburn, manufacture it wherever. The jobs are here, the costs are down, and people are safer, and it's efficient project and we're in on it, Buy Saskatchewan, and everybody agrees.

The only question they have, Mr. Speaker, is: what was going on before? What were these people doing? Were they asleep at the switch? Why wouldn't they allow Saskatchewan people to build? Why wouldn't they have rural gas distribution systems? Why wouldn't they have individual line service? Why wouldn't they have the kinds of technology that was existing there? We have rural gas distribution system in neighbouring provinces. Why wouldn't they make that commitment to rural Saskatchewan and to the towns and villages and the cities that didn't have it?

(1115)

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can only say this. Everybody in Saskatchewan agrees that we should do this. They agree with the mandate, and they've give us a mandate to provide that kind of structure.

As well, Mr. Speaker, I just point out the entire building thrust of this administration and this province will be based on the whole fact that if you work with people – with them, hand in hand – listen to them develop, listen to their ideas, go to their communities, then you can be successful in manufacturing, processing, and developing for generations to come. I will just say, Mr. Speaker, with respect to that mandate to build, we have received that from the people of Saskatchewan because they believe it is the strategy; it's a plan. It's linked to the future. And, Mr. Speaker, we will take that mandate very, very seriously.

I want to shift gears. The second mandate that we had, Mr. Speaker, was to protect the people of Saskatchewan. To provide protection against things that we normally can't handle ourselves as individuals or as families. And any politician in this room or in this province that is not prepared to protect

Saskatchewan families is out of step with Saskatchewan people. They want protection where they need protection against things that they can't control.

Mr. Speaker, I'll give you an example. When international speculators run the interest rates up to 20 per cent or 22 per cent, people in this province say that is not fair; somebody should do something about it; we should have somebody in the middle to defend our family farm or our family business or our home owner, somebody.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate; we have a mandate. We had a mandate in 1982. We've got a mandate in 1986 to protect people against high interest rates. Mr. Speaker, and do you know who disagrees with that – nobody.

Everybody says we should do that in this administration, and we've led North America in that protection – not only Canada but North America. We said we'd step in, and I don't care if interest rates go to 30 per cent, they're not going to be more than thirteen and a quarter, and now they're not going to be more than nine and three-quarters in this province for home-owners.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- And I said, Mr. Speaker, everybody agrees. They only have one question: what was going on before? Where were the priorities of the previous administrations? What were they? Interest rates were running at 22 per cent and not a dime, not a cent – no compassion, no caring – nothing. Worried about senior citizens; worried about farmers; worried about families? No compassion at all, and everybody agrees today the family should be protected against internationally high interest rates that can devastate an entire community.

We had questions this morning . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- We had questions this morning, you know, about a community like Lanigan because there has been a strike and it's legitimate discussion about what we can do to fix it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, at 22 per cent interest rates, community after community, the entire province of Saskatchewan was under siege by financial institutions and not one hand was raised to help people. And any small-business man, you try to make it go at 20 per cent interest rates; it's impossible, and nobody would help them.

Well, we have a mandate, Mr. Speaker, and I'll say this very clearly, to protect Saskatchewan people against high interest rates. We took it seriously in '82, we're taking it seriously in '86, and we'll take it seriously as long as we are government in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- We have a mandate to protect people against drought. It's not easy, but as much as we can do to provide drought protection in this province we are going to do. Whether it's international disaster mechanisms; whether it's irrigation systems or various kinds of programs that we can put together, Mr. Speaker, we are going to take it on.

I am not going to elaborate on a large number of things today. I'm sure my colleagues have, and I have from time to time in this House. Programs to protect people against some really difficult international problems. I would just raise this one because it's current. Internationally it's unfair. It's unfair if a

government like the United States government can take taxpayers' money and subsidize their producers of whatever – agriculture, lumber, steel, what it might be – cars. It's unfair, and if they pump millions of dollars into that product, encourage production, surpluses develop and the price goes as low as it's ever been. We'd bear the brunt of that in agriculture or in any other product. And it's unfair, and people in this province believe somebody should protect them against that. They should.

If European governments in their wisdom, or not so much wisdom, decide that they are going to highly subsidize agriculture products and it wrecks world prices, somebody should protect the farmer because he has to carry it on his back.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll give you this part of our mandate. We have a mandate to defend farmers and defend anybody else against unfair international competition. Mr. Speaker, we have lobbied hard for that. We have developed a national agriculture strategy. We have developed a deficiency payment mechanism now, that in 1987 will literally double net farm income in the province of Saskatchewan. It's the largest protection package we've ever seen in the history of Canada – in the history of Canada. The people of this province have given us a mandate to do that, and, Mr. Speaker, we will take it, that mandate in '86, in '87, and as long as we're here, to provide the protection for people against unfair international activities.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this province want a government that is compassionate. Not just talks about it – talks about it, but moves on it. See real moves.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- And they will ask . . . and if you get time to talk to them, if you go visit with them, they will say, I want to see a move on interest rates. And when you do something, they appreciate it. That's why they provided us a mandate in '82 and again in '86. We're protecting the farmers for drought –proof protection. If you do it and move . . . They don't want promises, Mr. Speaker, they want delivery. They want delivery. They're sceptical enough about political leaders and politicians that come in and out of the legislature. They want action. They agree, Mr. Speaker.

We had extra-billing in this province for a long time, and some people had to pay even if they didn't have money – had to pay more. And when we removed extra-billing, everybody across this province agreed. They all agreed. The only question they had – why so long? Where were the previous administrations? What were they doing?

Mr. Speaker, the people of this province want people of action, not just rhetoric, running the government. They elect people who say, if I'm going to protect you against extra-billing, you'd better be doing more than talking about it, you'd better be moving on it. That's the mandate that we've received.

Mr. Speaker, we received a mandate from the people of Saskatchewan to protect people that retire. Particularly women would never have financial security at retirement. They didn't have it. They couldn't get a pension —manby of them wives, farm wives – no financial security when it come to retirement. None. Small businesses couldn't have pension programs for their employees because they couldn't afford it. Insurance companies made it too expensive. And people cried out across this province: protect us, give us some assurance at retirement that we can have some financial security and dignity, something that would be unique to us, something that we could look forward to rather than just maybe a welfare roll because I can't get any financial security or any pension.

Mr. Speaker, with the help of the people and their advice, we have the mandate and have delivered the first ever North American pension program for home-makers and small-business employees and people of all demographic backgrounds. Everyone in this province —everyone – can have a pension at retirement; every

single solitary person, Mr. Speaker. We've even modified the whole welfare system so within years, two or three years, nobody will ever even retire in this province below the poverty level.

Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate to protect people at retirement, and do you know who disagrees with that? Nobody. Everybody in this province says, that's a very good thing to do. The only question they'll raise is: what was going on before? Why wouldn't they help us before?

Do you know what the people want, Mr. Speaker? They want action. They want a government to go in and say, if you need pension legislation, then you pass that legislation so we can see what you are doing. Not talking about it for 10 years or 11 years or 30 years or 50 years. Let's see you do something. I mean, you were elected to be responsible, to perform; not just be in power – to perform.

Well we have a mandate, Mr. Speaker, to provide protection and interest rates and drought and extra-billing and pension legislation and drug and alcohol abuse, Mr. Speaker. The first-ever treatment centre for young people across the country or western Canada, is going to be developed in this province. A treatment centre, Mr. Speaker. Right now Saskatchewan children have to go outside the country, outside the country into the United States to get that treatment. People and their families want that kind of protection, Mr. Speaker, and we have a mandate to deliver that. The only thing they'd say: what was going on before? A lot of rhetoric, but no action.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they want protection, as well, against unfair taxes – unfair taxes. And I'll go back and I'll look, Mr. Speaker, when we removed the tax off clothes for families, and we all know the impact of a sales tax. Sales tax is very regressive. It's the worst kind of tax because even the poor have to pay it. You can be on welfare and you have to pay sales tax; you're still getting hit. Income tax, obviously, is different. Income tax or a flat tax – at least you've got some income before you pay the tax. A sales tax, Mr. Speaker, is in theory and in practice most difficult for the poor.

Mr. Speaker, when we removed the tax, the sales tax, off the power bills and we removed the tax off clothing and we removed the tax off energy like gasoline, ordinary Saskatchewan people said, it's about time. It's about time to get the ordinary family, the working people, a break against the tax. They can't write everything off like a business man or a farmer. They said, give me a break. Give me a break. Mr. Speaker, that's what they said.

Well I'll just say, we have been given a mandate to protect low-income people, to protect people who have not had those kinds of breaks in the past, to provide them with interest rate protect. Some of them, Mr. Speaker – I heard a little chirp across the way – some of them, Mr. Speaker, in 1982, some poor families were losing 2 to \$300 a month because of 20 per cent interest rates; 2 to \$300 a month. Not a year, not over 10 years – a month. And nothing happened. Not one dime of help, and every month after month after month 2 to \$300 taken out of the family and they'd eventually lose their homes.

And when we came in, Mr. Speaker, we said, no more of that. I don't care what the international speculators say. We are going to protect you and we're going to take the tax off clothes and the tax off gasoline so low-income people who really feel the benefit – the marginal benefit is to them; not the high income but to the low income – they said, right on. And they agree today from one end of this province to the other that we should stand there and protect them against unfair interest rates and unfair taxes or unfairness wherever we can find it.

Mr. Speaker, the only question they asked: what was going on before? Why wasn't there that help for these individuals? Where was it? There was a lot of rhetoric. We heard talk about how they were going to help the poor and help these and help that, but when it came to digging in their pocket to protect them against the banks, or protecting them against taxes from Sask Power who charged sales tax on their utilities, not a

dime. The Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations could bill them and bill them and bill the poor – bill the poor. Well, Mr. Speaker, the record speaks for itself.

This province and these people want a government that will protect them and protect those that are most vulnerable – most vulnerable. Well, they asked for increased revenue for senior citizens. Well, the senior citizens in this province are very special to me and this administration, Mr. Speaker. They are the pioneers of this province and indeed this government. Mr. Speaker, we have provided, on the advice and the counselling to senior citizens, the largest, and maybe it isn't even large enough, but the largest increase and the largest cash payments to protect the incomes of senior citizens in the history of this province and one of the largest in Canada. And that heritage program that we designed for senior citizens is for those people that built this province. And they want hospitals and they want nursing home capacity and they want some income insurance, and they didn't have it before, Mr. Speaker. But they've got it delivered in spades.

In the mandate that we have received, this government has received now in 1986, I'll say this to senior citizens, Mr. Speaker: we will defend the health and the financial security of senior citizens as long as this government is in power in the province of Saskatchewan. We will be there to protect them against high interest rates, we'll be there to make sure they have accommodations, and we'll be there to make sure that they have cash when they need it, Mr. Speaker. We believe in the people that created this province and gave us the opportunities as we have today. And we're not going to forget them.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, and we will protect people in the work-force. This province has the highest minimum wage in Canada. I don't know if it's high enough, Mr. Speaker. Obviously it's a balance between having it as high as you can have it and still creating as many jobs as you can so the small firms that hire the people want to hire as many as they can.

(1130)

I know this – that we will certainly be competitive in protecting people against the wage levels, and we will compete. We have the best job record outside of Ontario in the country, the best employment record outside Ontario the last four years. In fact it's probably number one in this province. Despite drought and grasshoppers and all kinds of problems, Mr. Speaker, we've had the lowest to the second lowest unemployment, year after year after year after year.

Labour in this province, Mr. Speaker, knows that the salaries are good, the protection of their homes are there, the taxes on utilities are no longer there, the taxes on fuel is no longer there, and the minimum wage, Mr. Speaker, is the highest in the nation. I just point out. We have a mandate to stay the course, to make sure the minimum wage in this province is as fair as any place else in North America and as high as we can have it, Mr. Speaker, and still have the job creation record that we've had in the past. If we can make it better, we will.

But that mandate is here, Mr. Speaker, and nobody disagrees with that. Nobody disagrees. They just want to see more economic activity, more jobs, more projects, more upgraders, more paper plants, more manufacturing, more diversification. And I've already spoken about that.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the third part of our mandate is to manage – is to manage this province, Mr. Speaker. And anybody that doesn't believe, and any politician that doesn't believe that management is important, is out of step with the people of Saskatchewan. The people of this province want less red tape, Mr. Speaker. They don't want rules and regulations on top of rules and regulations so that you can't get anything done and you get the bureaucratic shuffle. We have a mandate to reduce the red tape, Mr. Speaker, and reduce

those rules and regulations. I believe that we have now taken something like 1,000 obsolete regulations off the books in the first four years.

An Hon. Member: -- Fourteen hundred.

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Well, 1,400. Fourteen hundred rules, obsolete regulations off the books that were there.

And people could go through various kinds . . . They could wake up in the morning to find themselves almost illegal, given all the rules and regulations. And they say to us, reduce the red tape. Why have inefficient duplication of rules and regulations? You know who disagrees with that? Nobody. They also say, do that. Provide that kind of efficiency and effectiveness.

And they say, Mr. Speaker, make sure that government is no bigger than it has to be. We want to see government as efficient, as effective as we can. We shouldn't have Crown corporations any bigger than they should be. We shouldn't have departments any bigger than they should be. They certainly say, Mr. Speaker, that this is the time, this is the time for quality, not quantity – quality, Mr. Speaker – when it comes to various kinds of institutions. They don't like big private institutions that are top heavy. They don't like big government institutions. They don't like big bureaucracies.

And if you read any of the recent material on what's happening with respect to the rest of the world, that's exactly the case, and the people of Saskatchewan are right on the mark. The trend today is efficiency and effectiveness and quality. And the very large institutions, whether it's General Motors, may find that they get beat every day by small manufacturing firms out of Japan which can show them. Because you have to be able to move, and move quickly.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate in this province by the people of this province to be as efficient, as effective as we can, in Crown corporations, in government departments or whatever that we are doing. We have a mandate, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that people can participate in government. And we have started it obviously in 1982 and have continued, and we will do more.

The participation in Crown corporations through shares and bonds, so that people here can invest. And they love it, Mr. Speaker. Hundreds of millions of dollars of Saskatchewan money has gone into investment, and what they really like is not having to go to an international bank and borrow the money and pay Americans interest. If Sask Power needs some money because it's going to build a power project or whatever it may be, it can go to the people of Saskatchewan and say, here's a bond – safe, secure Saskatchewan Power bond – 8, 10 per cent money. And if you buy that bond, then Sask Power can borrow the money from the people, and the interest goes to the people. And Sask Power doesn't have to go to New York and they don't have to pay the difference in currencies and exchange and run that risk. And the interest doesn't go to some New York banker; it goes to Saskatchewan people. And everybody agrees with that – everybody. The only question they say is, why hasn't it done before? Where was the imagination?

Why not let Saskatchewan people build. Even in terms of our Saskoil shares, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has said, it's a very good investment; if I could invest I would. Just paraphrasing. I mean, members of the legislature couldn't invest in it.

Allow people in Saskatchewan to invest in their own corporations or to get interest on the money that they want to borrow. It makes eminent sense and people are saying, that's running government efficiently and effectively in a participatory fashion. Allowing people to participate here and the interest going back to the province of Saskatchewan as opposed to international bankers.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate to continue that – to make sure those Crown corporations are run as efficiently and effectively as possible; to make sure they source Saskatchewan wherever possible; allow the people of this province to participate directly and indirectly whether it's shares or bonds or participatory instruments or, in fact, manufacturing for the Crown corporations. And we're going to stay the course on that, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, people of Saskatchewan have given us a mandate to lead, Mr. Speaker. They have given us a mandate to lead – to lead politically and to lead economically and to lead socially. And any particular politician in this room or in this province that doesn't believe that the people of Saskatchewan want to see that national and international leadership, is out of step with the people of Saskatchewan. Because they believe that they are smart enough and intelligent enough and well enough informed of world events that we should be out there, Mr. Speaker, providing that leadership in many fronts.

I'll give you a couple of examples, but there are many. We have worked closely with the people of Saskatchewan and with the farm organizations to develop a Saskatchewan agricultural strategy. And we have changed the tax system; and we have changed the irrigation system. We've got a new agricultural college; we've got science; we've got combinations of natural gas systems; many, many things. And I won't list them all. But a strategy for Saskatchewan that has direction, we know where we're going.

We've taken that strategy, Mr. Speaker, and we've carried it to the national level. It has taken a great deal of work but the people of Saskatchewan were right on. Their leadership, their view of what this province should be doing in agriculture was precisely what the national – the country – needed. The country of Canada needed an agricultural strategy. We took those ideas and we took them to every meeting that we could find, and particularly the first ministers' meeting.

Let's talk about a national agricultural strategy. Let's take the leadership role away. We have been hit with drought, and interest rates, and commodity problems, international trades problems, political problems internationally. Let's show that the Saskatchewan people can have the lead and show them how we can do it. We've done it at home; why don't we do it nationally.

To make the story as short as we can, Mr. Speaker – we did. And the people of Saskatchewan put together the national agricultural strategy that was accepted by premiers and the Prime Minister of this country, and it's the first time it's ever been done. Mr. Speaker, that national agriculture strategy which is the framework for this country in food and agriculture for the next 25 or the next 50 years is now on the books, signed by the Prime Minister and the premiers, that says we have a vision. We know where we're going to go in food and agriculture. We know what we have to do internationally, what we have to do locally, what we have to do to protect farmers, what we have to do in research.

Mr. Speaker, that obligation to politicians to provide leadership does not just end at the national level. It's international as well. The people of this province want to see a world agricultural strategy that makes some sense. And the people of Saskatchewan are going to be involved in that strategy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- The agricultural trade wars are the number one trading problem in the world today. If you could fix that, you'd fix most of them. The multilateral trade negotiations, as the Minister of Economic Development and Trade knows, focus on the bizarre policies of Europe and United States and others when it comes to agriculture. If we could have a world agricultural strategy that is inconsistent with Saskatchewan's, consistent with Canada's, and consistent with some other players around the world, Mr. Speaker, we can have a dramatic and powerful impact on our future for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have given us a mandate to go do that, not just deal with the problem in any particular corner of Saskatchewan; not just to deal with the problem in any particular corner of Canada, but to take our talent and our ideas, and the things that worked for us in the past, right to the international forum and make sure that we can make the changes there. It will have a very large impact on the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I will just say this. With respect to that mandate for leadership, this government will take it very seriously and we will not cease ever to make changes in the national agriculture strategy or other international strategies as long as this government is in power.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- The development to take place on trade, Mr. Speaker, will need leadership. As the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, we should have a free trade arrangement between the U.S. and Canada on potash. We need it -- we need it. We need the same sort of rules Ontario has. We need to have those trading relationship with Japan, with China, with the Pacific Rim, with South America, and with Europe. We have a good reputation, Mr. Speaker. They like Canadians, and they particularly like people from Saskatchewan. We should be out there making sure that the changes that are taking place today are in our favour. We can't just hope to sit back and get lucky. The world changes. The politicians change, the policies change, and we should be on the forefront making sure those changes are in our favour.

Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate to do that and we're going to take that mandate seriously. We're going to provide leadership, not only on pension legislation but on social reform that protects people, particularly low-income people -- people who really need that help, Mr. Speaker. Whether it's because of tax changes and tax reform, whether it's because of pension legislation, whether it's other protective measures, we will be there.

And, Mr. Speaker, we are going to have a leadership role when it comes to trade and languages. I visited yesterday with the deputy secretary of the Communist Party of the province of Jilin who is heading the delegation here. And I was talking to him about our Speech from the Throne. And obviously he speaks Chinese and I speak English and we were talking through an interpreter. Mr. Speaker, I mentioned to him, I said we are going to put more attention on training our young people if they want to be trained in that fashion, to learn the languages we use in trading with people around the world. And one of our major priorities will be Chinese. We have 1.2 billion people that are there as our customers, to a large extent because of potash and wheat and others. And young people pick up languages so quickly, so quickly. We are going to allocate public funds to make sure those students who want to learn Japanese or Chinese, those students who are prepared to go to spend six months or a year in China to learn the language and come back here developing trading relationships, have that opportunity.

I mean, what's the next wave after the computer, Mr. Speaker? Do you know what it is? It's communication of any kind. And languages are one of the most important things that we can do. We've made dramatic steps in French in Canada. My children are all bilingual, and the next generation will be bilingual -- more and more of the schools.

And, Mr. Speaker, as this world becomes closer and closer, those communities that can speak more than one, more than two, more than three languages, and particularly the important trading language, are going to be on the forefront, not just in computer technology, but in good, solid, honourable, eyeball to eyeball relationships that people understand and they can trust.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to take a leadership role, a leadership role, not only on building and not only on manufacturing and not only on protecting, but on developing our skills and our young people's skills so

that we can be among the finest trader and the finest people with the finest reputation and the finest communicators any place in the world. And we can do it.

My children are not intimidated by computers or technology. They just absorb it. There is a huge appetite for it. And they're not intimidated by languages. When they start young, when they are getting through into high school and universities, they can pick them up quickly.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this province. . . I'll just say this. We have a mandate in this province to make sure that we're not behind any other jurisdiction when it comes to communication, technology, or languages. That mandate will be taken seriously because we will be there providing leadership – not only for this province, but indeed the country, if it has to be.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to close with just a couple of observations about the alternatives that we have in this province. I believe building and protecting people, providing good, solid management effectiveness, and providing the leadership, is a mandate the people of Saskatchewan have given this government. And they want people in this administration to provide those goods and services and those qualities and that direction for the next four to five years. And they agree, Mr. Speaker, they agree from one end of the province to the other. And you can go through – and I've just listed them for the last half hour or more – how people will agree all over the province that that's the things that we should do.

(1145)

Well I want to give you a couple of ideas, Mr. Speaker, that I know the people of Saskatchewan don't agree with, and that I will guard against, because they have told me time and time again. When interest rates ever go up again and farmers ever get into trouble and any government comes out and says, I'll buy your land and put it in the bank and you can farm it for me, is going to be in trouble. Mr. Speaker, the land bank idea in this province is not something that everybody agrees with.

Mr. Speaker, nobody in this province wants the government to own the farm. And you can go across this province from one corner to the other . . . Mr. Speaker, I want to remind you of this . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, I seem to have got the attention of some hon. members opposite because I've struck a chord.

I'll remind the young fellow that was speaking – that just got elected – what it was like in '82. People in this province were facing interest rates at 22 per cent and the government wouldn't do anything to help. And the answer was, from the minister of Agriculture at that time, sell your land to the government. We'll take it and we'll own it and you can be the share-cropper.

And do you what happened? Do you know what happened across the province of Saskatchewan? Nobody – not anybody – believed that was a good idea. Mr. Speaker, I will never, ever let this administration look people in the eye and say: I will provide no interest rate relief; I will buy your farm from you and I can run it. That will never, ever happen in this administration. Ever!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, I want to make another point that's not going to happen under this administration. The Leader of the Opposition – and he can defend himself. He's not here, but I'm going to use a quote that this. This is the *Leader-Post*, October 7th. "We'd be taking land of production."

Mr. Speaker, I want to make this point very clear. We have experienced Operation LIFT (Lower Inventories For Tomorrow) in this province. We have experienced other difficulties but in this province we are not going to solve the agricultural problems by adding to them. We are not going to take land out of production in the province of Saskatchewan as the solution to the farm problem. We will protect the land. We will have soil conservation and we will look after the water. We'll look after the management and we'll have wildlife, but we will not wholesale take acres and acres of production and pay people not to grow.

Now, Mr. Speaker, any politician that stands up in this province and says that we'd be taking land out of production will not get the agreement of the people of Saskatchewan – will not get the agreement. It's just like the land bank. You will not get the agreement. The things that I've talked about this morning and are in the Speech from the Throne are accepted by everybody, but these aren't, Mr. Speaker. These aren't.

And I quote, and here's the reason. This is *The Western Producer*, October 2, 1986, the Leader of the Opposition: "There is no God-given right to survive in farming." That's evident, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the agriculture policy when there was 20-some per cent interest rates and the answer was, I'll take your farm. Well I guess there's no right to farm under that. I mean, we left Europe because we didn't want that to happen. We wanted to own our own farm.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- I just make that point, Mr. Speaker. I will never forget that, and this administration will never forget that. The government is not in the farming business. We've set a record in the last four years of selling land back to farmers, even under difficult times, and we're going to stay the course, Mr. Speaker, because I believe that entrepreneurial spirit that farms out there shows the productivity that is in the essence of Saskatchewan food production – not running it out of the government or the bureaucracy. I will never, ever let that happen.

I remind the members opposite: when people were losing thousands of dollars a month because of high interest rates there was not a word out of the previous administration –not a dime – and they talk about compassion and they talk about food banks and they talk about all the good things they're going to do for people, and not one cent when they lost their home and they lost their farm. What do they talk about? The Saskatchewan family of Crown corporations will run your farm.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I raise this – and it is partisan, and I admit it – because it is the very essence that I got into politics, because I wanted to see individuals and families and communities and people build with an industrial strategy that would allow them to go out into the world and compete and do well, not be smothered, not be overregulated, overruled with a bunch of rhetoric, but a government that would be sensitive and allow them to build the things that they want to build.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we heard about the building of potash mines, we've heard about the building of paper-mills, we've heard about the building of bacon plants, and everybody agrees we should be doing this.

Mr. Speaker, in the previous administration, I don't believe the previous administration built one new potash mine – not one. Never built one. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe the previous administration built one pulp company –not one. I don't believe the previous administration built one bacon plant – not one. I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, that they built a paper-mill, that they built an upgrader.

Mr. Speaker, you can look at pulp mills, and you can look at potash mines, and you can look at bacon plants – they didn't build one. Bought a few. Bought a few. Took the taxpayers' money and bought what was already here. Didn't create any new economic activity in building and diversification and growth. No. They bought the mines that were already here and didn't create one new job. All that money that they sent to New York -- \$600 million – all down to New York and the interest going there and not one job.

And they talk about the poor and they talk about the children and they talk about seniors and they talk about families. What a waste, Mr. Speaker. I'll never forget that, Mr. Speaker. I'll never forget it. As long as this government's in power, we're going to build new; we're not going to buy the past.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- What senior citizens would want us to buy the past? Why buy the trees that are there, or buy the roads or the lake or the mines or the packing plants? Any senior citizen would say to his children, go build a new home. Build a new business. Start a new activity. Don't just borrow money to buy the past.

It does not only make any economic sense, it doesn't even make any political sense. You didn't even hear about it in the last election that they were going to buy all this stuff again.

Mr. Speaker, I raise it because it's the essence of the difference – the essence of the difference – and the member says we're right, and he is right, and I agree with him. He would buy mines, and he would buy pulp mills, and he would buy packing plants, and I say, Mr. Speaker, we have a mandate across this province to build new—not buy the past.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Devine: -- Mr. Speaker, the final mandate that we have in this province – the final mandate – is to listen to people. And any politician knows, and any government knows that you will only do as well as you can listen to people – listen to men, women, children, people from all walks of life and all jurisdictions, communities, municipal governments, school boards, organizations. And we have a mandate, Mr. Speaker. And if I have learned anything in the first four years of our government, it is to listen to people.

And I just say very sincerely that I'm going to be supporting the motion, the Speech from the Throne. And I say to the people of Saskatchewan, this administration will listen, and I will listen to the people, whether they're farmers, whether they're in towns and villages, whether they're in businesses, whether they're in cities – north, south, east, or west.

Mr. Speaker, the mandate to build and diversify and protect and grow and manage is only as good as the people that are doing that and staying close to the people of Saskatchewan. This government, Mr. Speaker, this administration will listen, it will manage, and it will build and it will protect, and it will provide leadership, nationally and internationally. This government, Mr. Speaker, will be a government of the people. I'll be supporting the motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure that I rise in this Assembly this morning to say a few words about the throne speech. It's a particular pleasure for me because I was one of the members who did not have the privilege of sitting in this last Assembly when we witnessed all of the heavenly things that the Premier just talked about.

And I would like to start off my remarks, if I may, by once again congratulating you on your selection as Speaker. I know that the last eight days in this Assembly have proven to be quite important and educational for all of us, and in particular yourself, and I think you've conducted yourself very well, My best wishes for continued good works in this Assembly.

I'd like to also take this opportunity, if I may, to congratulate the mover of the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, the member from Saskatoon Eastview. I at one point in the past had that privilege and I feel that it is quite an honour. And he did a very good job in making his presentation in his remarks. Also, my congratulations to the seconder from Pelly who, I think, if he doesn't take too seriously the remarks of the Premier, will likely do a good job for his constituents in the future.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the government on its re-election. Many members that are not here now, I think would be interested in being in government at the moment. I know that the former member from Moosomin who was in the opposition gallery a few moments ago was a very good member in that caucus. He had done his job very well. He was an articulate speaker. He spoke on behalf of his constituents. And I personally thought, having known him between the period of '79 and '82, to be a very capable person comparatively to his colleagues. And I was always quite puzzled as to why he was never put in cabinet because I think he would have made one of the top five or six in that Executive Council. But it was nice to see him in the Assembly today and I think that we should all keep in mind that there are other people around that have served here and could have done a very good job.

On election night on October 20, 1986, I had some interesting feelings and I wanted to share them with you this evening. I thought about two or three things. One, that when the victory was finalized in the constituency of Regina North West, a feeling of gratitude to those who had voted for me and my party in that constituency. And I also felt a substantial amount of gratitude to those who had worked for me in the election campaign, and thought about my grandparents and my family as well.

My grandparents came from the Ukraine in 1890s. They were one of the first wave of immigrants to this country. They homesteaded north of Dauphin, Manitoba, and farmed all their lives. My grandfather lived to the age of 96 and was a pioneer that Canadians can certainly be proud of and our family is proud of.

I thought of my parents who are no longer with us; they are both deceased. My father died on the election day of 1979 when I was elected, and I thought of my mother as well who had passed away in July of '83. And I thought primarily about what they had taught me to do as a child and as I was growing up, and what they had impressed upon me to try and do in the term of my life. They had encouraged me to treat all people with respect, to treat them like I would want to be treated myself. They also taught me to be as honest in my dealings with people and in my life and my family as I could. And I hoped I've fulfilled those goals in their life as I know I believe I have.

I also want to remind members that we are elected to represent everybody in our constituency, and together as members in this Assembly we are elected to represent everybody in this province. And we must not forget that when we're debating issues in this Assembly or when we are working in various parts of the province.

I'd like to take this opportunity as well to thank the voters directly, of Regina North West, for their overwhelming support on October 20th. Along with my gratitude to them, I offer a special thank you to the 400 people who worked in my constituency in my campaign and to the 800 families who publicly demonstrated their courageous support by placing a lawn sign on their property.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: -- Those Regina North West families openly displayed their support for the New Democratic Party in spite of the threat of reprisals from the Conservative government, the government that the Premier has talked about doing so many great things for people and for families. And after listening to his remarks very briefly, you'd think everybody in this province, if they took them seriously, would have died and gone to heaven. And I don't think that's the case, Mr. Speaker.

But we're in a difficult period in this province, a difficult period for people who must always watch over their shoulders for PC reprisals, whether it be in the private or public sector. My party and I recognize and applaud the courage of our supporters to stand up for what they believe in. In particular, their courage to stand up to a PC government that rules this province, in many instances, like tyrants in a banana republic.

(1200)

Regina North West has 16,000 voters. It is the third largest constituency in the province. These voters and their families come from all areas of the city, the province, and the country. They work hard, those that are still working that is, and the number is getting smaller daily it seems. But they work hard in all sectors of the economy, including agriculture.

My riding is a reflection of Saskatchewan, as many of them are. But the families who live there are concerned about either getting a job, or if they have one, concerned about the security of their job. They're concerned and apprehensive about the future, Mr. Speaker, and where they and their children fit into that future. They're concerned about what this PC government has in store for them. They're concerned because they have suffered the anguish and anxiety of four and one-half years of Conservative rule in this province and they expect little to change in the future. This feeling has only been reflected with the content and thrust of the throne speech that we heard earlier last week.

However, Mr. Speaker, the families of north-west Regina have placed their confidence in the New Democrats to protect them as much as possible from massive continued abuse by the PC government. They have placed their confidence in our party to protect them by electing 25 strong, able representatives in our party. And in this light, Mr. Speaker, I pledge to my constituents to work hard on behalf of their families over the next four years – and hopefully longer if they choose – to ensure that they have the representation that they deserve in this Assembly. I'll work to confirm that it is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness. And together my colleagues on this side of the House will work to confirm Saskatchewan's belief that it is better to light 25 candles than to curse the darkness reflected by the governing 37 members opposite.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: -- My constituency is composed of many neighbourhoods – Regent Park and Lakewood and Rochdale Park; Walsh Acres, Sherwood Estates, McCarthy Park, Normanview and Normanview West. And I want to at this time in my remarks, Mr. Speaker, convey a message to them about an issue which I feel will concern them in the future – primarily, the issue of rail line relocations.

There has been a rail line relocation committee that is funded by the city. They have spent in the area of \$1 million to date putting forward a proposal to move the CNR yards which are on the south boundary of my constituency and on the north boundary of the Rosemont constituency – moving those yards and the CPR yards downtown, the CPR main line – to the north-west part of the city and the north-east part of the city.

The Canadian Transport Commission (CTC) is now holding public hearings. The last one was this afternoon—or yesterday morning. They will reconvene on January 20th. And I wanted to inform my constituents through this Assembly that they should be looking very closely at what that rail line relocation plan is.

I've looked at it very closely, I've made the representation on their behalf to the transport commission and I feel that it's, very simply put, a catastrophe in planning. They are planning in moving the yards and the rail lines from one part of the city to another part of the city. They're not getting rid of the problem or eliminating it. They're transferring it from one location and time which is now, to a new location and time.

And I feel it's going to be really important that politicians at the municipal level, and the CTC and others, and in particular citizens in this city, look very closely at this plan and make the conclusion, as I have and many others have, that to spend \$57 million in phase 1 and a further \$40 million in phase 2, to just move the problem from one part of the city to the next is a major mistake. If we're going to move the rail yards and move the lines, that we move them to a location that is a permanent location, either farther north outside of the city so there's no longer problems, or to an area east, west, or south. There are many, many options.

When I took a look at the proposals that were put forward and the map that the rail line relocation committee had drawn up, they proposed in phase 1 to build the yards north-east of the community of Uplands which is in the north-east and north constituencies, on their boundaries. They planned to move it 930 feet north-east of the house northern-most in Uplands. And in my view that's a mistake for a number of reasons.

One, the aquifer is right underneath the yards that they propose. The aquifer provides 30 per cent of the drinking water in Regina and everyone knows that the quality of that water now is questionable. Whether we can further endanger our own livelihood by polluting our water in the future, we should be very, very careful about that.

I would also like to point out that there are some really strange discrepancies and some mysteries presented by the presentations that have been put forward by the CTC. They plan to run the CPR main line 930 feet north of Rochdale Park, the residents of Rochdale Park and Lakewood. And what that will do, in essence, is will provide a main line for between 20 and 40 trains a day with a north-west prevailing wind blowing diesel fuel into the community, running it on the Condie Ridge which is the high point of the city, (actually the high point of the Regina Plain), and if there was a spill to occur, such as a chlorine gas spill, which is a heavy gas, it would naturally seek lower ground and it could possibly be a potential major disaster for not just north-west Regina but all of the city, indeed.

So I want people to be aware of that. I will personally be trying to meet with more people. I've met with all of the residents of Lakewood on a number of issues over the past 18 months. I have not spoken to all of them on this issue but I plan to do that in the near future and to inform them of what kind of catastrophe that this plan puts forward to them.

I would also like to encourage any members of the public to go forward to the CTC. The juggernaut of the rail line relocation can only be stopped by the CTC at this point, or amended. I personally have made recommendations that the CNR and the CPR and the city be ordered to get together and negotiate a new location to ensure that the safety factor is looked at in a closer light, that our environment is better protected and that the three parties can come to an agreement.

What disturbed me a little bit in my presentation was that the CNR and the CPR both supported my contention and my intervention. And I thought about that for a bit, but I talked to them before and afterwards and everybody that's made any intervention on this matter has opposed it for very well-documented and very important reasons. And the only group that seems to be supporting it is the mayor of the city.

I drove out to where the yards are going to be located and there are wheat fields all around except in two locations. On the east side of the yards there was wheat field all around, but where the line was going to come through was a property owned by Ramsay Construction. On the west side of the yard . . . I'm sorry, that was west side. On the east side of the yard there were two properties through which the rail line were going to go through, one owned by Genstar and Trimac.

And what I started thinking about is at what cost are we building these yards where they are, environmental problem, the noise problem, the pollution problem, but in fact possibly increasing the cost because we have to purchase or expropriate these properties right here with wheat fields all around. None of the railways wanted to build there. They wanted to go farther north, another mile north or north-east, which would solve the problem for future city development and certainly solve their problem in terms of possible safety precautions and so on.

But I'll be saying more about that as time goes on, Mr. Speaker. But I did want to take this opportunity to inform my constituents and to ask them to call the rail line relocation committee in the city hall and to ask them if there is some objection to this proposal that they try and make some presentation, either as a group or individuals, at the hearings. And I'll be speaking with them on that matter.

It's been the tradition in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, when an opportunity afforded itself, to boast about all of the government expenditures made in the members' constituency, in particular when the member is on the government side. Well, I do not sit on nor indeed support the government side at this time, but I'd be pleased to speak about the recent government expenditures in north-west Regina.

North-west Regina has received a government grant to convert an empty school into the Pasqua Neighbourhood Recreation Centre on Pasqua Street. We have seen in our riding the building of Sherwood Village Library on Rochdale Boulevard. The Government of Saskatchewan has contributed significant funds to upgrade and refurbish Regent Court into Regency Court, a housing development which provides decent affordable housing to those who have a more difficult time financially to meet rent commitments in the private markets. The Saskatchewan government has spent \$2.3 million to build the North West Leisure Centre on Rochdale Boulevard and has constructed two primary schools, Centennial and W.H. Ford School, and approved one high school.

That sounds like a great deal of activity for a four and one-half year term. But wait – all of these projects didn't happen in four and one-half years. They didn't even happen in three and one-half years. They were undertaken in just the two and one-half year period, Mr. Speaker. What's that you say, member from North, just two and one-half years? That's sounds like a record anyone could be proud of – doesn't it? – and it is.

But let me tell you when all of these projects were undertaken, Mr. Speaker. They were undertaken not by a conservative government opposite. Were they initiated by the previous PC member of the constituency of North West? No, absolutely not. Mr. Speaker, all of the projects that I have mentioned were initiated, approved, or completed between 1978 and 1982 when an NDP member represented North West constituency and when an NDP government represented this province, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: -- Not one project in the last four and a half years has been undertaken in the north end of Regina at all by this Conservative government. I'd like to say that the NDP government between '78 and '82, they undertook these projects because they cared about families, not like the PC government who are more concerned about oil companies, banks, and multinational corporations.

Mr. Speaker, most observers of the political scene in Saskatchewan, and of the recent throne speech in particular, are in agreement that it has become painfully obvious that this Conservative government is a government in decline. And as their slippery slide downhill to political oblivion becomes faster and faster, they are desperately trying to dig their heels in to stop or at least slow down the pace of their demise as a government. This throne speech by the PC government is a deliberate attempt to halt their fall. It is yet another rhetorical appeal to the people of Saskatchewan to tighten their belts while they and their rich friends let out a few more notches.

But more than this, this throne speech contains an ominous and dangerous message to the people of Saskatchewan from the Conservative government. Mr. Speaker, in a brilliant flash of light, a brilliant flash of insight, this throne speech informs us, and I quote, "The world economy is in transition." My, my, my! The world economy is in transition.

Where did the Premier come upon this earth-shattering revelation that the world economy is in transition? I didn't know where he found out that information until I discovered in a newspaper article that he found out the world economy is in transition by reading an article in a magazine flying on an airplane from Ottawa to Regina. Now what puzzles me is why couldn't he have found that out from all the high-priced Conservative help he has in Regina. He has probably close to 150 staff members in his department, many of them making 70 or 80,000 or 90,000 or 100,000 a year or more, and they couldn't tell him what's happening. Either they didn't know, or what is more likely, the Premier and his cabinet wouldn't listen anyway.

Mr. Speaker, it's not often I agree with much the *Leader-Post* editorials espouse, but I do agree with the editorial comment made in this regard to the throne speech on December 4. It goes on and I quote:

What is dispiriting is an absence of positives. Premier Grant Devine continues to butter up the people of the province for their pioneer qualities of 'openness, ingenuity and perseverance' which will enable us to 'exploit changes in the world economy.'

And it goes on:

There are references carried on from those in the last legislature to 'protecting' the people from the outside calamities, all apparently justifying further deficit financing and warning that more must come.

(1215)

Mr. Speaker, this is all that this throne speech represents, a shallow justification for a bad job done by this Devine government, a faltering attempt to justify the wasteland created by this Conservative government over the past four and one-half years they have been in control of the province and the lives of our people.

Time doesn't permit me to outline all of the serious ramifications this throne speech has for the people of Saskatchewan, but here are a number of areas I feel should be brought to the attention of Saskatchewan people, areas of concern, Mr. Speaker, that will seriously affect each person in this province unless the fly-now, pay-later philosophy of this government is revealed for what it is.

When I speak to people in my constituency, I find them quite aware of the breakdown of prices in volume and employment in the national and international community. They are aware of it because it concerns them and it affects them. And they too travel on airplanes like the Premier, and they too are able to read magazines. Yet this throne speech offers either no solutions or solutions which certainly bear close scrutiny. Let's look at a few of the Devine solutions offered.

To small business they offer a five-year \$50 million high technology strategy. Apparently the idea is that it will help small business buy computers and high-tech office equipment. The question is, how will it help small business?

It's my opinion, Mr. Speaker, that most small businesses in Saskatchewan are efficient and well run. While new high-tech equipment would help them somewhat in their businesses, it seems logical to assume that they would attempt to purchase such equipment themselves if it were to make them more competitive or if this was the critical need of their business.

What is more important is who will get the contracts for supplying this equipment to these small businesses? Will the contracts be tendered? And from the record of the government to date, the answer to that one is painfully obvious. Or is there some other method this government has in mind so that friends of the government can benefit from the \$50 million that will be spent?

Is this one of the ways this government is going to provide the private sector with the opportunity to compete with the government in the provision of services? We

I'll be watching very carefully who really is going to benefit from this huge purchase of high-tech equipment – the small businesses for whom it is intended, or the large corporations who fund the Conservative Party and sell hardware.

Finally, when these funds for new equipment are used up, who will pay the ongoing costs of servicing this equipment and replacing it? Who knows? The throne speech doesn't give us that kind of information, and nor will the Progressive Conservatives. And most business people are sceptical about whether the government can accomplish anything with this program, anyway.

What should better serve small business is getting more Saskatchewan people back to work so they can spread the money around in the economy. Instead of giving \$300 million per year in tax breaks to the oil companies, and massive give-aways to Weyerhaeuser and Peter Pocklington and other international corporations and banks – instead of corporate give-aways, spend the money in Saskatchewan for Saskatchewan jobs.

For every dollar spent in our economy, another \$3 is generated through the multiplier effect. If we were to instead spend the \$400 million to \$500 million in this province this government across the way annually gives out to their out-of-province corporations and friends, the effect would generate \$1.5 billion of economic activity right here in this province —billions for all of Saskatchewan people, not billions for friends of the Conservative Party outside our province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Solomon: -- If these corporate welfare give-aways had not taken place, there would be a far more manageable deficit in our province, and more people working, and a larger contributory base for income tax purposes, and obviously fewer social problems. Simple economics to help people.

But instead the Conservatives prefer complex economics for their corporate, multinational, and national friends – the poor struggling friends of the PCs – those struggling corporations like Exxon and Shell and Texaco and Weyerhaeuser and Peter Pocklington.

The PCs shipped them these tax breaks and they, their friends, shipped the tax breaks back to the parent internationals and nationals outside this province which then filters down to the stockholders throughout the world, all of them and the majority of them 99.9 per cent outside of this province. All we get in return, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for our massive subsidy of these Conservative friends, is a huge deficit and, of course, long-term debt for our children.

But the PC party believes in generous corporate contributions to their political war chests, contributions which pay for the PC propaganda, which in turn encourages Saskatchewan people to vote PC, so the drain on their tax dollars continues unabated for the friends of the Tories.

So you see, Mr. Speaker, rather than commit themselves to improving our economy to create jobs, they prefer the corporate handout which in turn finances their party. The three fundamental principles of the conservative party: greed, materialism and selfishness. Three cornerstones that they promote and feed themselves through their corporate friends.

Some aspects of the throne speech which could be considered comical, Mr. Speaker if it were not for the tragedy they reap on the ordinary people of this province, are points that I'm going to raise right now.

Take for instance this government's answer to the serious economic problems through creating research institutes. This government wants to create more research institutes, and that's an honourable thing if you have some objectives. We have institutes already in this province and we have universities. We have research capabilities already in existence in a number of fields. But the research is difficult when universities and institutes that exist now are so badly underfunded by the Conservative government.

Each day we hear about the effects of cut-backs at our existing post secondary institutions – places, Mr. Speaker, capable of providing the kind of information the Premier seems to think we need. But the Premier says our existing research capabilities and the people involved aren't good enough. We need to create some new institutions, and we need to cut back further at the universities and other existing institutions so that our young people are suffering even more.

So while more and more Saskatchewan people are denied the capability of solving their own problems through existing institutions, more money will be made available for five or six or seven new institutes. Our own existing universities will have budgets slashed even further while new are created. For what purpose? Well if you have to build all these new institutes and do some more studies, you can effectively stall long-term commitments to real solutions to Saskatchewan's economic development.

It gets worse. There's something very frightening about this government's proposal to create a government department of human resources, labour and employment. In the same breath as the throne speech mentions this, it says that civil servants should not look forward to pay increases, that social assistance programs will be continually reviewed, and that the requirements for health services will be reviewed too.

This sounds very ominous to me. It looks very much like creations of a giant bureaucracy designed to undermine working people and their unions. It appears that further attempts will be made to cut back on services to those who need them most. And further, it looks clearly like we can look forward to a fundamental change for the worse in the quality of health care in Saskatchewan.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, in one way this throne speech does have some consistency with previous speeches by this government. There will be even more tax and royalty breaks for the oil companies. No mention of tax breaks for individuals or small-business, no mention for more long-term, full-time jobs for people, but more hand-outs for oil companies. It seems that \$300 million in royalties and tax breaks each year just wasn't enough for the poor oil companies. They need even more to do the big, tough jobs of drilling for oil in existing pools. However, small business can only look forward to \$50 million in fancy office equipment with no tax breaks for them or for the people who work in them. And the unemployed and low-income families get blamed again by this government for their incompetency and for the rising costs of their mismanagement.

The Premier states in the throne speech that he intends to give even more taxpayers' money away. After four and a half years he has decided that government workers are incapable, totally incapable of providing services as efficiently as private companies. So he's going to allow private companies to compete with government in the provision of services. Of course, then the government won't have to be responsible, will it? Now that this government has blamed its problems on everybody else in the world . . . In '82 they blamed them on the NDP; in between '82 and '86 they blamed them on the NDP; during the campaign they blamed them on international economic cycles. But now it's going to pass on its responsibilities to the private sector in Saskatchewan.

All of this is meant to somehow make Saskatchewan world class – to use the often-quoted phrase of the Premier. By undercutting home-grown industries and workers, we are somehow going to be more competitive in the world markets. This view, Mr. Speaker, from a Premier who stood by doing nothing while the federal government made a decision not to provide the CF-18 contract to a Winnipeg firm.

This view from a Premier who couldn't and wouldn't stand with a sister western province on an issue which had to do with the very thing he talks about in the throne speech – the ability of a province to diversify its economy. Who did the Premier stand with? He stood four-square with the Prime Minister – four-square, shoulder to shoulder – with the Prime Minister from central Canada, who is plummeting like stone in the polls.

But that'll change as Mr. Mulroney's popularity declines, because as we all know, the government opposite never acts. It does a poll, it hesitates, then it reacts. And that's exactly what it's going to do when it finds that the wrist chain that they have with the federal government is going to draw them down into the gutter where the federal government is now grovelling.

The Premier clearly said by this actions that he really does not believe what he says he believes in. This government can no longer attempt to straddle the fence and keep both ears to the ground at the same time. Pretty difficult thing to do. Either it's committed to the people in this province or it should clearly state where its real loyalties lie. And we all know where its real loyalties lie. It's tough to hide the fact many PC cabinet members have oil on their boots and banker's letter-head on their desks.

What we are seeing in Saskatchewan and Canada is a conspiracy. What we are seeing in this province and this country, Mr. Speaker, is a conspiracy on the part of conservative governments everywhere -- a conspiracy to change the face of government so the traditional purpose of government, to deliver services to families and to protect families through various social programs in times of need, is weakened to suit their own cruel, costly, political purposes.

What they are doing in essence is saddling government with massive debt, nearly \$3 billion in Saskatchewan's operating budget alone this year. They're saddling government with massive debt so that government's only responsibility with massive debts so that government's only responsibility down the road is to manage debt, not introduce or improve or manage programs needed by people in our province.

They are going to set this province and this government provincially, and this government federally, into a cycle that the only job that we are going to have to do as legislators is to figure out ways to pay the banks and the bond dealers around the world, not in this province.

And the job of government will be, I predict, thanks to the Conservatives opposite, not program delivery, but debt management – spending our resources, satisfying the requirements of the banks and bond dealers outside our province, not spending our resources to create jobs or to delivery needed programs to our people.

I could go on, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly have a lot to say. But I think I'm going to be around here for a few more months, and hopefully a year or two. And I will be glad to try and convey and share some of my ideas with this Assembly, and in most part to continue to represent my constituency in a way that they have not seen for the last four or five years.

The other day I went to a Christmas concern. My six-year-old Jennifer had a concert at Ruth M. Buck. Ruth M. Buck School is located actually on the boundary of Regina North West and Rosemont constituencies. And at that concert, I watched with a great deal of emotion – because I do get emotional around Christmas time; it's a very important time for families. But I watched the families during the concert and I listened to the children. And what appeared to me to be the most important message from the children at that time was,

as I was listening to their songs and admiring the work they had done in terms of preparing for the Christmas concert, I thought about where they were going to live in the future and what kind of future they were going to have.

I think that it's really important for all of us to remind ourselves on a regular basis that the job that we do in this Assembly is for the benefit of our children. J.S. Woodsworth once said, "What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all." And I think that that is something we have to keep in mind, not only for all of us currently that are alive and currently working and operating in our economy, but for the children that are now in school, that are looking towards having some career, having a world of peace, and so on.

(1230)

Mr. Speaker: -- I must inform the Assembly that under rule 13(3) it is my duty at this time to interrupt debate and put the question on the amendment.

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

Yeas

Blakeney
Prebble
Brockelbank
Shillington
Koskie
Romanow
Rolfes
Mitchell
Upshall
Simard
Solomon
Kowalsky
Atkinson
Anguish
Hagel
Lyons
Calvert
Trew
Smart
Van Mulligen
Koenker
Goodale

■ 22

Nays

Devine
Muller
Duncan
Andrew
Martineau
Johnson

McLaren
Hopfner
Berntson
Taylor
Swan
Muirhead
Maxwell
Schmidt
Hodgins
Gerich
Hepworth
Hardy
Martin
Petersen
Swenson
Martens
Baker
Toth
Gleim
Neudorf
Gardner
Kopelchuk
Saxinger
Britton

■ 30

Mr. Speaker: -- Is this a point of order?

Mr. Solomon: -- I was interrupted almost in the middle of my remarks. I still have just one or two minutes left before I finish my speech in the address in reply. I had the floor when you interrupted me.

Mr. Speaker: -- According to the rules of the practice of this House when a member is speaking prior to interruption for the amendment vote, he loses his place unless he is given leave by the House. Is leave granted for the member to continue?

Mr. Solomon: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you hon. members. I just wanted to take one more minute and finish my remarks. When I was talking about the Christmas concert at the Ruth M. Buck school and the children that were present, I wanted to at that point try and say a few words to the members here before the Christmas season started. I would like to certainly be the original author of something that was inspirational, but I thought it would be more appropriate at this time to just read a message that Tommy Douglas once conveyed and I'd like to quote in the record if I may. And I quote:

The Yuletide season is not time to talk about politics or national affairs. This is a time to think about Christmas and what it means for us and all mankind. We usually associate Christmas with sprays of holly, tinselled trees and gift-wrapped parcels, but surely these are only the trappings of Christmas. Its true meaning lies much deeper. To find its real significance you must go back to those words which some lowly shepherds heard on the Judean hills 2000 years ago, "Peace on earth and goodwill towards men".

Peace on earth is not something we have achieved but something for which we must strive if mankind is to survive. If Christmas means anything, it should mean that like the shepherds of old, we catch a vision of the world as it ought to be and not as it is.

If we and our children are going to live in a world of peace, the spirit of Christmas must be part of our everyday living and permeate our national life. If we live for ourselves and ourselves alone, we are desecrating the message of Christmas in delaying the day when peace on earth shall not be merely a fervent hope but a blessed reality.

I'd like to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to convey cordial greetings to all members present and to extend my best wishes for peace, goodwill, and happiness throughout 1987 and throughout this Chamber.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: -- Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and privilege for me to stand in this House and represent the people of the Canora constituency.

I would first offer my congratulations and support to you, Mr. Speaker. I feel that you, sir, have the ability and the integrity to serve the position with great distinction. I would also like to express congratulations to all my colleagues on both sides of this House who have been elected to serve in this the 21st Legislature of the province of Saskatchewan. Let us work together so that the people of Saskatchewan are the benefactors of our efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a few remarks about the people of the Canora constituency. These people of my constituency saw fit to send me to Regina as their representative and they did it with a greater majority than the Progressive Conservative Party enjoyed in the 1982 election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: -- This speaks very highly of the Premier of this province and the Progressive Conservative government and is a clear-cut endorsement of our policies and programs. Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not take a few moments to talk about the excellent leadership of our Premier.

In Canora constituency, people respect the Premier as a leader they have faith in, a man they can trust. The Premier is known as a straight shooter. There is no doubt in my mind that the Premier was the key reason why this Progressive Conservative government was returned to office. People believe in the programs of our Premier; they know he has the courage to do what it takes to build Saskatchewan. I know that my Progressive Conservative colleagues have spoken in support of the Premier, but I believe the facts need to be emphasized. Premier Grant Devine, the Premier of Saskatchewan, is by far the best premier in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: -- And, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be in this legislature as a part of this Progressive Conservative team. Mr. Speaker, when a constituency located in what is often called "red square" can return a Progressive Conservative member to the legislature, there is a clear and decisive indication that rural Saskatchewan has become a free enterprise area.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is another reason why the people of Canora constituency are once again on the government side of the House. That reason, Mr. Speaker, is because of the superb effort that was made by

the people of my election team. These people dedicated approximately 28 days of non-stop campaigning to ensure the re-election of this government.

The men and women of my campaign team can take pride in a job well done. I personally and sincerely recognize the hundreds of people who canvassed, door-knocked, put up signs, worked in the office, and just did every job that needed doing. Today I hope they feel that this victory was their responsibility.

(1245)

Mr. Speaker, I would like to briefly describe my constituency. It is made up of many diverse nationalities and interests. It stretches from the southern farming communities of Willowbrook and Jedburgh to the forest reserve areas of Usherville, Endeavour, and Rockford. We have the beautiful lake resort areas that touch Springside, Theodore, Tadmore, and Amsterdam.

We go to the west to communities such as Tiny, Buchanan, and Rama. Our largest trading centres are Canora and Preeceville, with Sturgis not far behind. You can hunt deer at Insinger or Gorlitz in the southern part, then pursue moose and elk at Ketchen or Hazel Dell or Okla or Lintlaw. You can visit with some of the most successful farmers in the province at Ebenezer.

I feel that I represent one of the most friendly, honest, and hardest-working areas of the province, Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the people I represent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kopelchuk: -- Mr. Speaker, they are builders, and they are fighters of doom and gloom, and they want to be a part of Saskatchewan and its history.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to examine in a little more detail some of the reasons why the Canora constituency has returned a Progressive Conservative member to the legislature. The people of my seat know and acknowledge that in the past four years this government has protected, it has built, and it has provided opportunity. Mr. Speaker, when you talk protection to the people of Canora, you talk about 6 per cent farm production loans to our farmers; you mention the abolition of the provincial tax on gas and you talk about mortgage rate protection for home owners. The people of the Canora constituency know that the Progressive Conservative government is there to help when help is needed.

We have had, and continue to receive, excellent co-operation as we build our constituency. Major school renovations have been approved, and in some cases completed, in Sturgis, Springside, Rama, Preeceville, and Endeavour. Senior citizen housing units have been built in Buchanan, Springside, Theodore, and Canora. A new hospital will be built in Theodore in 1987.

The farmers of the Canora seat are extremely interested in the announcement that production of farm chemicals will take place within the province. These are the kinds of ideas that they like because this investment will bring down farm chemical prices while at the same time providing jobs for Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, within 40 miles of Canora are located three major lake resort areas. Within that area, we also have eight golf courses, of which six have grass greens. I mention this, Mr. Speaker, because this type of infrastructure is vital in the tourist industry.

Once again, the people of the Canora constituency welcome the government announcement of a 5-year, \$50 million program to stimulate tourism industry expansion in our province. Our business people are elated about tourism because this government has announced that in expanding the tourism base they will be

directing this program to local communities. This Progressive Conservative government will assist local communities and cultural groups to develop their individual strengths in tourism.

Mr. Speaker, the Canora constituency has one of the highest senior citizen population groups in the province. This makes our health care program of paramount importance to us. The people of Canora note that our government is now spending over \$1,000 on every man, woman, and child in Saskatchewan, which is the best in Canada.

We also note, as I mentioned earlier, the senior citizen housing units that have been built, the new hospital at Theodore, and additions of special care beds to lodges at Canora and Preeceville. We welcome and are appreciative of all this assistance which has been provided. But, Mr. Speaker, our needs are unique and constantly increasing. Therefore, I pledge to the people of the Canora constituency that I will continue to press and ask our government for assistance in providing adequate care for our elderly and our sick.

Mr. Speaker, at White Spruce the government of Saskatchewan is going to establish a new drug treatment centre for teenagers and young people. This drug treatment centre at the former Canadian forces base will be the first of its kind in Canada. It will provide a family-orientated drug treatment program. I congratulate the Premier and the government in the leadership it has shown in establishing this drug treatment centre at White Spruce.

The problem of alcohol and drug abuse is a serious one in today's society. It is a tragedy so many people are touched by these problems. The Government of Saskatchewan is showing real leadership in its five-point attack on drug and alcohol abuse. The facility at White Spruce will go a long way in helping those with drug and alcohol problems.

Mr. Speaker, the home improvement grant has helped many home owners in the Canora constituency to carry out all sorts of renovations and additions to their homes. The home improvement grant has been a real boost to the local economy for carpenters, plumbers, electricians and general contractors. I want to thank the Progressive Conservative government for having the vision to introduce such an excellent program to help home owners. There has been no other province in Canada that has brought such a plan to help home owners.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would also want to say that I am proud of the 10 year, nine and three-quarter per cent mortgage program introduced in the Speech from the Throne. I'm sure all those with mortgages in the Canora constituency are pleased to see the introduction of this plan which will protect them if mortgage ever go above nine and three-quarters per cent. Again, this is a case of the Progressive Conservative government protecting people.

During the campaign, Mr. Speaker, because the Canora seat is so predominantly agriculturally based, four more factors that relate to farming became vote issues. I am first referring to the record number of young farmers that have or are contemplating the purchase of land as a result of eight per cent interest rate. When you compare this program to land bank, it is no wonder that at farm after farm I talked to young farmers who were openly supporting me and the Progressive Conservative government, and at the same time admitting their parents often supported a different political party. These young farmers were second and third generation farmers who had decided to change their politics at this time.

This government has initiated three other programs of extreme importance to rural Saskatchewan. The first is the installation of natural gas to farmers, thereby drastically reducing heating costs. The installation of private telephone service for farmers is another impressive program. I believe that these two programs go a long way to proving to rural Saskatchewan that there are no second-class citizens in Saskatchewan. The final program that I wish to mention is our government's promise to remove the surface power lines and

poles from rural Saskatchewan. I predict that this program will be one of the most popular during the next few years with our farmers.

Mr. Speaker, as MLA for the Canora constituency I am pleased to support the motion in support of the Speech from the Throne. Today, I have delivered my maiden speech to this legislature and look forward to being an active member of this legislature. The Speech from the Throne contains the programs of the Progressive Conservative government of which I am proud to be a supporter.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I wish to inform you that I will be voting in favour of the Speech from the Throne.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Andrew: -- Mr. Speaker, being near 1 p.m., I move this House do now stand adjourned.

Leave not granted.

Hon. Mr. Berntson: -- Mr. Speaker, I understand that we would have a procedural problem, and since I have waited for some time to get into this debate, and I know that members opposite have waited as well with eager anticipation, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:56 p.m.